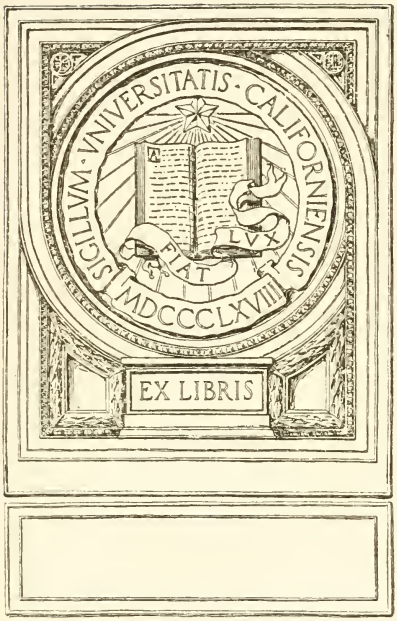
THE UNVARYING EAST

REV. E. J. HARDY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THE UNVARYING EAST

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Photo by *American Colony, Jerusalem.*

CARRYING A SICK LAMB.

Frontispiece (see p. 240).

THE UNVARYING EAST

MODERN SCENES AND ANCIENT SCRIPTURES

By THE REV. E. J. HARDY, M.A.

CHAPLAIN TO THE FORCES, RETIRED

AUTHOR OF "HOW TO BE HAPPY THOUGH MARRIED," ETC.

WITH 24 ILLUSTRATIONS

"We can hardly do anything, I doubt if we *can* do anything, for people to be compared with helping them to understand the Bible."
—ARCHBISHOP TEMPLE.

NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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1912

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS

WHO WOULD LEARN IN ORDER

TO TEACH

241419

PREFACE

THIS latest indulgence of mine in the bad habit of writing books should be excused, because whatever else " The Unvarying East " is it is not long-winded. It is intended for those who have not opportunities of travelling or time to read large volumes on Eastern manners and customs. It is true that people nowadays are more inclined to read about great books, including the Bible, than to read great books themselves, but it is also true that he who only knows the Bible does not the Bible know.

The ignorance of the Bible that prevails is so great that I am not surprised at an experience related by Sir Ernest Shackleton. To a little waiting-maid who brought to him tea one morning he said, " ' What a rainy day, Mary ! It's almost like the Flood.' ' The Flood, sir? ' said the little maid. She looked at me with a puzzled smile. ' Yes,' said I. ' The Flood—Noah, you know—the Ark—Mount Ararat.' She shook her head, and murmured apologetically, ' I ain't had no time to read the papers lately, sir.' "

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

THE best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself, and the next best is residence in the East. The Bible was written in the East, by Easterns, and, in the first instance, for Easterns. When Mark Twain was in Palestine he wrote: "One must travel to learn. Every day, now, old scriptural phrases, that never possessed any significance for me before, take to themselves a meaning." This was my own experience. Hardly a day passed when I visited the Holy Land, or was stationed as Chaplain to the British Forces in China, in Egypt, or even in Malta, that I did not see a living, walking illustration of something mentioned in the Scriptures. A millionaire would render sermons more easy to listen to if he founded travelling scholarships which would enable Divinity students and ministers of the Gospel to spend a certain time in Bible countries. The acquisition of knowledge of Eastern ways gives us, if not a Fifth Gospel, certainly a setting of the four we have, in newer and more clearly cut type.

Whoever wrote the different parts of Genesis, or whenever they were written, the antiquity and

Eastern character of the book is proved by the fact that it contains stories, such as that of the Creation, of the talking serpent, of the confusion of languages, which have parallels on the monuments and in the traditions of most Eastern nations. It is, for instance, a widespread tradition that woman was made out of a crooked rib of man, which breaks if you try to straighten it and remains crooked if you leave it alone. Thirty-nine years ago a Babylonian version of the Flood was discovered, and quite recently a cuneiform fragment came to light which gives an account of the same event very similar to that recorded in the Bible. It describes the building of a great ship, the going into it of beasts and of birds, the end of the Flood, and many other details. On bricks to be seen in the British Museum may be traced some of the names which we read in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis. Chedorlaomer, for instance, is the Hebrew transliteration of Kudur Lagamar. Lagamar was the name of one of the Chaldean deities, and the whole name means Lagamar's son. The inscriptions or, as they may be called, "stone books," that have been deciphered on the Egyptian and other monuments have greatly helped Bible study. Take one example. In 1 Kings xiv. 25 we read: "And it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak King of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the King's house." On a pillar of the Egyptian temple of Karnak a king, thought

to be Shishak, is depicted killing captives, and the features of the captives are Jewish.

In reference to the prophet Isaiah, Professor Driver remarks: "The deciphering of the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria has enabled us to watch the movements of the Assyrian kings, almost year by year, through the whole period of his ministry, and the result has been to exhibit this great prophet's character and position with a distinctness and completeness which, antecedently, would assuredly not have been anticipated" ("Isaiah: His Life and Times," p. 4).

A few years ago a young woman about to visit the Holy Land called on an old lady friend who loved her Bible, and read it from beginning to end. She told her that she soon hoped to see Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, and all the places associated with the life of Christ. The old lady put down her work, removed her spectacles, and exclaimed, "Well, now! I knew all those places were in the Bible, but I never thought of their being on the earth!" It may interest our readers to know that the Desert of the Exodus, for instance, has an actual existence upon the face of the earth, and that the route of the Exodus is being mapped and studied and photographed by enthusiastic scholars and travellers. It brings the doings of the Children of Israel in the Pentateuch much closer to modern life when we realise that the route of the Exodus is cut in its first section by the Suez Canal.

In his "Higher Criticism and the Monuments,"

Introduction

Professor Sayce says : " Those who have been in the East, and have tried to mingle with the native population, know well how utterly impossible it is for the European to look at the world with the same eyes as the Oriental. For a while, indeed, the European may fancy that he and the Oriental understand one another, but sooner or later a time comes when he is suddenly awakened from his dream, and finds himself in the presence of a mind which is as strange to him as would be the mind of an inhabitant of Saturn."

> " East is East and West is West,
> And never the twain shall meet."

Accuracy is abhorrent to the Oriental mind ; it is hazy about numbers and quantity. The European is a close reasoner ; the reasoning of the Oriental is of the most slipshod kind. The European demands evidence for his beliefs ; the Eastern is unsceptical and refers the common occurrences of life to the direct intervention of supernatural agency.

In the Holy Land people have lived, and live now, for the sake of protection, in villages, the population of each village varying from four hundred to a thousand persons.

The Bible, however, is by no means only a village book, or one written about large towns, such as those that were rebuked for their vice and luxuries by the prophets. The patriarchs lived in tents, and many of the prophets in deserts. The singers of Israel

drew much of their imagery from country life. And he who would bring his spirit most happily into communion with Jesus Christ must follow Him afield. Our Lord used everything around Him as texts and illustrations of His teaching. Did He see water brought up from Siloam in a golden vessel at the Passover? The incident introduced a discourse on living water. It was when standing or sitting near the great candelabra of the Temple that He said, "I am the Light of the World."

"God likes common people, and that is why He made so many of them." These common people heard Christ gladly because He illustrated His teaching from the common things of life—the birds of the air, the flowers of the field, the ways of animals, the business of the market.

The desultory, fragmentary way in which we often read the Bible hides from us its Eastern and other characteristics. We think of it as a mere collection of texts. After he became celebrated as a writer, Thomas Carlyle visited his parents. At the conclusion of the first evening meal the Bible was put down before the great man and he was asked to read a portion at family prayers. Carlyle began the Book of Job, and became so interested that he read it to the end. When the household had been kept up much after their usual time for retiring, the reader closed the Bible and said, "It's grand!" This is the way to understand the context and setting of the several parts of Scripture. So fast is the East becoming Westernised and modernised

that any one who records what he has seen of the old style of things helps to prevent Biblical allusions from becoming unmeaning.

The texts quoted in the following pages are from the Revised Version.

AGRICULTURE

CHAPTER I

AGRICULTURE

In Palestine there are no hedges or ditches dividing fields, but the gardens, and sometimes the vineyards, are surrounded by walls made of rough stones of different sizes fitted together without the use of mortar and covered with dry thorn-bushes. In Numbers xxii. 24 we read that the angel who opposed Balaam stood between two of these walls. Serpents hide in the hot, dusty crevices of such a fence or wall. So it is said in Ecclesiastes x. 8: "Whoso breaketh through a fence, a serpent shall bite him." Even if men do not break through these walls, wild boars do in order to eat grapes, as the Psalmist observed (lxxx. 13).

"The slothful will not plough by reason of the winter; therefore he shall beg in harvest, and have nothing" (Proverbs xx. 4). People plough in Palestine with small ploughs and oxen, so they must do so in winter when the rains have softened the ground.

The plough used now is the same kind as that in use thousands of years ago. It is so light that

a man going to work carries it on his shoulder. It has only one handle, and this the ploughman holds in his right hand and presses down to prevent the plough getting out of the furrow. If he looked back he could not do this ; so the words of our Lord are strictly accurate : " No man, having put his hand [not " hands "] to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God " (Luke ix. 62).

When we know the kind of plough referred to we understand the words " They shall beat their swords into ploughshares " (Isaiah ii. 4). This means that they shall beat their swords into rims of metal and place them around the shares of their small wooden ploughs.

A goad is an indispensable accompaniment of a plough. The pointed upper end serves, instead of rein or whip, to guide and urge on the oxen. The other end has on it a kind of chisel, and this is used to clean off from the share earth and weeds. " The words of the wise are as goads " (Ecclesiastes xii. 11). This means that they guide or keep in the right path (furrow). " It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks " (Acts xxvi. 14) is a proverbial expression taken from the action of an unruly ox, which, when pricked by the goad, kicks back and wounds himself. It was to sharpen the chisel end of goads that the Philistines allowed the Israelites to have files (1 Samuel xiii. 21). And yet six hundred Philistines found that a goad could be a formidable weapon, for with a goad Shamgar slew that number of them (Judges iii. 31).

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"UNEQUALLY YOKED."

Agriculture

In Amos ix. 13 we read: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed." This is often realised now. The seed late sown yields a harvest, and the time for treading of grapes is sometimes prolonged into the rainy season, when the husbandman begins to sow his seed.

Elijah "found Elisha the son of Shaphat plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth" (1 Kings xix. 19). I never knew exactly the meaning of this until I used to see in the East six, eight, or twelve small wooden ploughs drawn one after another in the same part of the ground to be ploughed. In this way the men enjoy each other's society, and are more secure should robbers attack them, as they attacked the ploughmen of Job (i. 15). The oxen, too, work better in company. Elisha's plough was the twelfth in order.

St. Paul's words about being unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Corinthians vi. 14) were one day vividly impressed upon me when I saw in Egypt a camel, a donkey, and a woman drawing together a wooden, old-time plough, and a man driving them.

In order to understand our Lord's parable of the sower we must remember that in the East a road is generally only a track passing through cultivated land. Dean Stanley found a place that disclosed every feature of the parable. There was the trodden path with no fence to prevent the seed falling on

either side of it. There was the "good" soil. There was the rocky ground of the hillside. There were the larger bushes of thorn.

To such a place a sower went forth to sow (Matthew xiii. 3–9). That is, forth from his village, for all Eastern people live in villages for greater security.

The yield of a hundredfold spoken of by our Lord in the parable is never secured from barley or wheat. Can it be that the same mode of reckoning crops was then what it is now? It is now assumed that one-third of the crop will be eaten by the birds and another by mice and insects, and if thirty-threefold be secured by the cultivator he tells you that his land has produced a hundredfold.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psalm cxxvi. 5). It is a sorrow for poor farmers to have to take for seed grain which would feed their families, and the sowing is sometimes almost useless because of bad ground and unfavourable weather. No experience enables a farmer to know in any given year that what is sown early will prosper best, or whether late sowing may not be better, or whether they both shall be alike good (Ecclesiastes xi. 6). Much depends upon the former and the latter rain. He sows in hope, and as often as not fills his bosom with sheaves from his fields.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters" (Ecclesiastes xi. 1). This refers to the way rice is sown upon land that has been inundated for its reception.

In Deuteronomy xi. 10 Moses tells the Israelites

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WATER-WHEEL FOR IRRIGATION.

To face p. 37

that the land which they were going to possess " is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy feet, as a garden of herbs . . . but a land that drinketh water of the rain of heaven." I lived in Cairo for three years and only saw three wet days (see Zechariah xiv. 18). In this absence of rain the Nile, distributed over the land in channels, nourishes the crops. The earth is divided into seed-beds by little banks, and the cultivator, instead of using a can to water his plants, lets the water run from an enclosure where it is not wanted into one where it is by pushing aside some of the earth-bank with his foot.

It may be, however, that the reference is to water-wheels worked by the feet, such as we see now in China and other Eastern countries.

At Zeitun, near Cairo, may be seen how the desert can be made to blossom like a rose. In that suburb people have built houses with fine gardens. The gardens were, a few years ago, nothing but sand, but they are now so well watered by water from the Nile, skilfully brought to them, that they produce beautiful roses and other flowers.

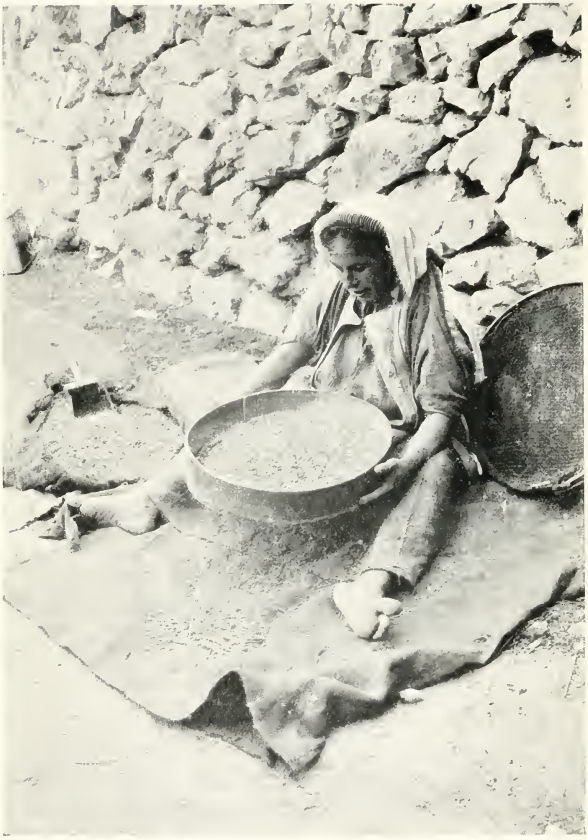
The sickle is still used as it was in Bible times, the reaper holding the corn-stocks in his left hand, and after him the binder filling his bosom with them (Psalm cxxix. 7).

Gideon was beating out wheat in a winepress to hide it from the Midianites (Judges vi. 11). Instead of carrying his grain to the ordinary threshing-floor,

he had taken it into his vineyard, where both it and himself would be less seen. Threshing-floors were then, as they are now, in the open country and on elevated positions, so that after the grain is threshed the wind may winnow it ; the vineyards are in less conspicuous places. The threshing-floor has either a smooth rocky surface or one made of clay and cow-dung.

Gideon beat out his wheat himself, but it is generally done now, as it was also in his day, when there is a large quantity, by a primitive machine. A yoke of oxen drag over a threshing-floor, upon which corn has been spread, a heavy slab of wood like a sleigh. On this sits the driver, and often his son too, to make it heavier. One kind of threshing machine has iron teeth or sharp stones under it ; another iron-shod rollers or small wheels. The first is the " sharp threshing instrument having teeth " mentioned by Isaiah, who also distinguishes between the two kinds of machines when he says, " The fitches are not threshed with a sharp threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin " (Isaiah xli. 15 ; xxviii. 27). It was one or other of these " threshing instruments " that Araunah offered when David wanted wood to burn a sacrifice (2 Samuel xxiv. 22).

Sometimes no threshing instrument is used, but asses, horses, and oxen are driven in and out and round about upon the grain. The command of Moses not to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn is obeyed by most Eastern farmers. St. Paul



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SIFTING GRAIN.

To face p. 29.

advocated the same principle for ministers of the gospel (1 Corinthians ix. 9, 10).

Little use is now made of a fan to purge the floor. More commonly the corn is tossed up on a windy day, and in this way winnowed.

The grain is put into sacks and carried away upon the shoulders of asses and the bunches of camels. The broken straw is called "teben," and is that which was refused when the children of Israel wanted it to mix with clay for the bricks they had to make (Exodus v. 7). (See Job xxi. 18; xli. 29.)

When Messiah's kingdom shall come, Isaiah says (xi. 7) that "the lion shall eat straw like the ox." In Egypt there is no hay, and horses are always given teben, or crushed straw.

As in our Lord's time on earth, the chaff and broken straw unavoidably left on the ground, after gathering and winnowing, are burnt, to get rid of them and to fertilise the soil by the ashes. "Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly cleanse His threshing-floor; and He will gather His wheat into the garner, but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire" (Matthew iii. 12). In Amos ix. 9 we read: "I will sift the house of Israel among all the nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve." The little stones and dirt which have got mixed with the corn have to be sifted out.

The Book of Ruth is a picture of what may be seen in the East now at harvest-time. Modern politeness requires the same salutations between a farmer and his labourers (Ruth ii. 4). The workers

took their dinner under the shadow of a rock, and Ruth was invited to eat bread and to dip her morsel in the vinegar or sour wine. She was helped to parched corn, but she would not eat all she got for fear of appearing greedy. Corn-heads are roasted now on a fire of dry grass and sticks and eaten as of old. Widows, fatherless children, and others in distress are now allowed sometimes to glean amongst the sheaves as was Ruth (ii. 7). That young woman separated the corn she gleaned from the chaff by hitting the straws against a board or a stick. Boaz winnowed barley, as I have often seen men do in Eastern countries, by throwing shovelfuls into the air until the wind had blown all the chaff away. And when he had finished, although he was a wealthy man, he did not go to a bedroom and lie down on a bed, but "at the end of the heap of corn" out of doors. In the East people sleep in any place and at any time, just as dogs do. It was no doubt, however, to prevent his corn from being stolen that Boaz slept on the threshing-floor.

The "inheritance" of the Hebrews "was allotted them by line" (Psalm lxxviii. 55), and the communal land is divided annually in just the same way now in Palestine. Those who wish for land come to a certain place, and pebbles with the names of the plots available are put into a bag. A young boy is called upon to take out the pebbles. He hands one to each of the applicants. On receipt of a pebble the man says, "This is my lot, may God maintain it," as the Psalmist says, "Thou main-

Photo by] [*Bonfils.*

GLEANING.

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tainest my lot" (xvi. 5). It is of great importance to the peasant proprietor where his assignment is located. The "lines may fall" to him in a place far from his dwelling, or on poor soil, or on a rocky spot, or on sheltered, sun-warmed ground near a stream or well. The Psalmist congratulated himself that the lines had fallen to him in pleasant places (xvi. 6). Each allotment bears a name, such as "the field of the partridge," "the field of the mother of mice," &c. It was the same in Biblical times. We read in 2 Kings xviii. 17 of the "fuller's field," and in Matthew xxvii. 7 of the "potter's field."

The Hebrews did not use churns as our version of Proverbs xxx. 33 implies. "Churning" means shaking the milk backwards and forwards in a goat-skin bottle hung between poles, or pressing it to and fro, first in one direction and then in another, till the globules of fat are separated. This, no doubt, is the way in which what is called "butter" in Genesis xviii. 8 was made. In the same country the same method of butter-making is used now. When we have lived where wine is made, and have seen wine changed for different reasons from one receptacle to another, we understand the illustration in Jeremiah xlviii. 11, 12: "Moab hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity: therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed. . . . I will send unto him them that pour off, and

they shall pour him off ; and they shall empty his vessels, and break their bottles in pieces."

In reference to the hopes of the wicked, Job says (xxvii. 18) : "He buildeth his house as a moth, and as a booth that the keeper maketh" ; and Isaiah (i. 8) that "the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers." The booths or shelters for those who watch crops in the East are generally badly built, easily destroyed wooden or mud huts covered with boughs. But the keepers of vineyards were not meant to be comfortable or to sleep. It is to this duty of wakefulness that the Psalmist refers when he says (cxxx. 6) : "My soul looketh for the Lord, more than watchmen look for the morning." (See Psalm cxxi. 3–5.)

The keepers or watchmen commonly employed now in Egypt and the Holy Land are tall, jet-black Nubians. They wear long white clothes, carry stout sticks, and are faithful to their employers. The picture of the owner of a vineyard going out early in the morning to hire labourers, whom he finds standing in the market-place, is quite natural, and to this day often repeated in the East. Thus a traveller in Persia, describing a visit paid by him to one of the cities of that country, says : "We observed every morning, before the sun rose, that a numerous band of peasants were collected, with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired for the day, to work in the surrounding fields. This custom struck me as a most happy illustration of our Lord's parable, par-

ticularly when, passing by the same place later in the day, we still found others standing idle, and remembered His words, ' Why stand ye here all the day idle? ' as most applicable to their situation ; for, on our putting the very same question to them, they answered, ' Because no man has hired us.' " Equally natural was the agreement with those hired early in the morning, that they should work for a penny a day. The penny was a denarius, worth eightpence or thereabouts ; and such a sum would be good remuneration for a day's work in the East at the present day.

And labourers in a modern vineyard sing or shout in unison as they did when Jeremiah (xxv. 30) spoke of the shout of those " that tread the grapes," and represented Jehovah saying : " I have caused wine to cease from the winepresses : none shall tread with shouting ; the shouting shall be no shouting " (xlviii. 33).

BEASTS AND BIRDS

CHAPTER II

BEASTS AND BIRDS

REED and wattle booths for cattle, such as Jacob made at Succoth (Genesis xxxiii. 17), are to be seen now in Egypt behind the mud huts of their owners. Beasts, however, are often kept in a dwelling-house. The house is divided into two parts, one part being raised about a yard above the other. The upper portion is reserved for the family, and the lower is frequently used as a stable. Laban told his visitor that he had "prepared the house, and room for the camels" (Genesis xxiv. 31).

Moses told the Israelites that when they were leaving Egypt not a dog should move his tongue against man or beast (Exodus xi. 7). This assurance would be pleasant now to any one approaching a modern Egyptian village, for if his dress or actions were at all unusual the dogs would raise a dreadful barking. The dogs mentioned in the Bible are in many cases just like the pariah dogs I saw in Baruth and in Damascus. In the daytime they are all "dumb, dreaming, lying down, loving to slumber." They return at evening, "make a noise and go round

about the city" (Psalm lix. 6). "They are greedy, they can never have enough" (Isaiah lvi. 11). Hunger makes them dangerous. "Dogs have compassed me . . . deliver my darling from the power of the dog" (Psalm xxii. 16, 20).

These pariah wild dogs that we see in Eastern towns, and the kites and vultures that fly about in the country, make us think of what Elijah said: "Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat" (1 Kings xxi. 24).

So despised are dogs in the East that they are said to be "without" the New Jerusalem (Revelation xxii. 15). They are never allowed, when they grow up, into the houses. It is different, however, with little dogs or puppies. These are often carried into the houses, and eat at mealtime the fragments of bread which are always to be found where there are no knives and forks and only fingers are used. Our Lord was too accurate and too courteous to use the despised term "dogs" in His remark to the Syrophœnician woman. He spoke of "little dogs," "doggies," or "puppies" (for that is the literal meaning of the Greek) when He said: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the little dogs." "But she answered and saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: even the little dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs" (Mark vii. 27, 28).

The sheep-dogs one sees in the East now are treated as if they deserved Job's disparaging com-

Photo by [*American Colony, Jerusalem.*

WATERING ASS FROM SKIN BOTTLE.

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parison : " They that are younger than I have me in derision, whose fathers I disdained to set with the dogs of my flock " (Job xxx. 1). The dogs are kicked, stoned, and half-starved, but they do their duty. They bark at man or beast going near the flock, and keep sheep and goats from straggling.

" Ye that ride on white asses " (Judges v. 10) means " Ye of royal rank," for a white ass was, and in some places is now, the mount of majesty. I have several times seen an ullama or Mohammedan high priest riding on a white ass in Cairo at the ceremony of sending off the holy carpet. He would have thought it unworthy of his dignity to have attended in a carriage or on a horse.

A mule is also considered more aristocratic than a horse. David gave orders that Solomon should ride upon his [David's] own mule (1 Kings i. 33).

" What struck you most in Palestine? " a theological visitor was asked. " Oh," he replied with enthusiasm, " it was to see the asses and their foals on the very spot where Christ got the colt on which He rode." We hope that the visitor did hit upon " the very spot." All that the present writer is sure of is that there are a great many asses everywhere in Jerusalem and round about it, and that he saw pilgrims casting their garments upon colts (the animals are used when far too young) and sitting upon them as upon saddles (Luke xix. 35).

" And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescents that were on their

camels' necks " (Judges viii. 21). Similar crescents adorn camels now in Cairo and Damascus.

I never saw clearly the point and pathos of the parable which Nathan the prophet told (2 Samuel xii. 1–6) in order to bring home to David the true nature of his sin until I discovered that in the house of nearly every poor Egyptian or Syrian a lamb of kid is kept as the pet of the family.

In Spain I have seen daily donkeys or mules carrying away street-sweepings, sand, and earth in straw panniers placed on their backs. To prevent these receptacles from pressing too much against the sides of the beast, a slender pole is passed under its belly, and this holds the two panniers apart. This spectacle recalled Naaman's request of the two mules' burden of earth (2 Kings v. 17).

We read in 1 Kings x. 28, and in 2 Chronicles i. 16, ix. 28, that Solomon's horses were brought from Egypt. The order of trade is now reversed. The British army of occupation in Egypt get horses from Syria.

" As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God " (Psalm xlii. 1). A man who lived many years in Syria writes : " I have seen large flocks of panting harts gather round the water-brooks in the great deserts of Central Syria, so subdued by thirst that you could approach quite near them before they fled."

" They shall be a portion for foxes " (Psalm lxiii. 10). Jackals are meant, and any one who has

heard these beasts howling and fighting at night deprecates becoming "a portion" for them.

"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks" (Proverbs xxx. 26). Conies are rock badgers; they are plentiful in parts of Palestine. In the time of Ezekiel, Bashan was celebrated for its "fatlings" (xxxix. 18), and Amos calls oppressors of the poor "kine of Bashan" (iv. 1). The bulls seen now at Bashan do not "beset" the tourist "round" as they did the Psalmist (xxii. 12).

Eastern princes, as we see now in India, have more or less extensive zoological gardens. This is how there was a den of lions ready for Daniel (Daniel vi. 16).

I have seen cattle making their way through villages to their quarters and opening doors with their horns.

I once saw at Damascus the owner of a large number of donkeys free them when they had finished their day's work and allow them to find their own way home. So cleverly did they do this that I was reminded of Isaiah i. 3: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." In the East cribs or mangers are generally on the ground and built of mud.

A traveller in the Holy Land thus writes: "After we left Elim and were approaching the sea-coast one of our cameleers suddenly rushed ahead of us some twenty-five yards, and a moment later returned

with a live quail in his hands which he had just caught. This event, occurring at the very region where the Children of Israel were so abundantly fed by the flocks of quails, wearied by their flight over the Akaba arm of the Red Sea, was a wholly unexpected exemplification of the phenomenon of the Bible. It was the same east wind blowing over the same sheet of water into the maze of valleys that brought us our quail, so weary as to be easily caught by the Bedawy of to-day."

It is said in Job xxxix. 29 that the eyes of eagles behold their prey afar. Some of us have observed these birds circling round and round and then pouncing down upon some beast or bird which they have caught sight of from a great height.

When we saw "the Towers of Silence"—that is, the place in Bombay where Parsees dispose of their dead—we were reminded of Matthew xxiv. 28: "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." In the margin, instead of "eagles" we have "vultures." The Parsees do not either burn or bury their dead. Instead, they keep a large number of vultures in the Towers of Silence, and lay dead bodies on slabs to be devoured by them. There sit the vultures waiting for a meal, and the moment a corpse is left for them they swoop down on it.

Doves of several kinds are very numerous in Palestine, and here as well as in Egypt, near every considerable house, there is a dovecot made of mud, with wide-mouthed earthen pots inside as nesting-boxes.

The turtle-dove came to Palestine in the spring (Canticles ii. 11, 12), and so regularly that Jeremiah could say: "The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the ordinance (judgment) of the Lord" (Jeremiah viii. 7).

After the birth of a child a woman was to offer in the Temple, if she could not afford a more costly gift, two turtle-doves or two young pigeons, and the offering of these after the birth of our Lord was mentioned by St. Luke (Luke ii. 24) as a sign of the Virgin's poverty. And when the Child grew up and began His ministry, it was natural that amidst such familiarity with doves He should tell His disciples to be as "harmless" as they are (Matthew x. 16).

Sparrows are still sold in the markets of the towns of Palestine for the smallest price fetched by any bird. Fed on the cornfields, they are fat, and exemplify the care of Providence, as the Lord Jesus pointed out (Luke xii. 6).

BUSINESS

CHAPTER III

BUSINESS

THERE is a touch of Eastern bargaining in the way Abraham pleaded for Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis xviii. 22–33). Certainly Jacob bargained with God in prayer (Genesis xxviii. 20–22). Mohammedans do so now.

Any one acquainted with the polite insincerity of Oriental transactions fancies himself in the bazaars of Cairo or Damascus when he reads the twenty-third chapter of Genesis or the twenty-first of first Chronicles. In the former Abraham's purchase of the cave of Machpelah is described. At first Ephron, the owner, offered it for nothing, as Ornan offered his threshing-floor to David for nothing. When Abraham insisted that a price should be stated, Ephron named one commensurate with the princely position of the patriarch: "Four hundred shekels of silver, what is that betwixt thee and me?" (Genesis xxiii. 15).

The price paid was about £50 of our money, if, as is probable, the shekel of silver weighed half an

ounce. The "current money with a merchant" were bars of silver or pieces of any size or shape. These Abraham weighed, as they do now in the interior of China. In the bill of sale were mentioned "the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border round about." If these particulars had not been stated, Abraham might have been told afterwards that he had only bought the field, not the cave or trees that were in it. It is a common thing in the East for a man to own a well in the middle of a garden or field that belongs to some one else. The well was found by the man who had bought the ground, and not having been specified in the deeds, the well, according to custom, remained the property of the former owner of the land. In buying land from Arabs everything connected with it is particularised—all that is on the land, trees and stones, and all that shall be found under the ground, as, for instance, buried treasure.

The legal formalities, so to speak, of this purchase were transacted "in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city" (Genesis xxiii. 18). I have seen magistrates sitting and legal business being done at one of the gates of Tangier. The vacant space near the gates of Eastern cities is now, and always has been, the official place of business, especially of law business. (See Genesis xxii. 17; Proverbs xxii. 22, xxiv. 7.)

The cave of Machpelah containing the supposed grave of Sarah and of Abraham himself is now

enclosed by a large mosque, into which only very few Christians have ever been admitted.

Isaac made a treaty with Abimelech King of the Philistines. "And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swear one to another" (Genesis xxvi. 31). "Betimes," in the East, means a very early hour. The late Emperor of China gave audiences and held receptions at three o'clock in the morning.

Jethro gave Moses good advice. He told him not to overtax his strength, but to decentralise his work and trust details to subordinates (Exodus xviii. 17, 18). One reason why great Eastern countries have been so badly governed is because their rulers have tried to manage everything themselves.

The first and perhaps the only attempt that was made to get a woman's property law passed in the East is that of which we read in Numbers xxvii. 1–11. The five daughters of a man called Zelophedad presented themselves before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, at the door of the tent of meeting, and formally made a claim to the inheritance that would have fallen to their father had he been alive. It is pleasant to read that the claim of the girls was admitted and the rights of women respected.

In Deuteronomy xv. 6 it is said of the Jews that they shall "lend unto many nations," and we know that they have become the money-lenders of Europe.

In ancient Athens, and even in modern Japan and in parts of India, the business of Rahab was not, and is not now, considered disgraceful. In the old licentious Jericho it would not have banished Rahab from her family (Joshua ii. 1, vi. 23).

The custom of taking off a shoe and giving it to one with whom a bargain is being concluded is alluded to in Ruth iv. 7. In the story of Ruth, her kinsman took off his shoe as a sign of his renunciation of his claim to marry her. In Psalm lx. 8, "Over Edom will I cast out my shoe" means, I have renounced Edom.

The Shunammite lost her land by merely going to reside, during a famine in her own country, in the country of the Philistines (2 Kings viii. 1-6); and it is still common for even petty sheikhs to confiscate the property of persons who move away temporarily from their districts.

Job says (iii. 21) that the bitter in soul "long [wait] for death, and dig for it more than for hid treasure." When diggers think that they are near a "find," they become frantic and continue to work until quite exhausted.

The sluggard is told in Proverbs vi. 6 to consider the ways of the ant, "which having no chief, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." Eastern people will not work unless they are well watched by overseers. A modern Arab illustration of laziness is the case of a man who would not turn his head over on his pillow though muddy water, leaking

through the roof, fell into his eye! "The sluggard burieth his hand in the dish; it wearieth him to bring it again to his mouth" (Proverbs xxvi. 15). Forks not being used, the sluggard puts his hand into the dish, but this exhausts his energy and he cannot bring his hand to his mouth.

"A needy man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food" (Proverbs xxviii. 3). As a rule, a pasha under Turkish government, if he is poor, uses the system of farming taxes to enrich himself. In many countries in the East tax-collectors are big and little tyrants, who destroy a country like tropical rain. "May God multiply your sheikhs" is a fearful malediction of modern Arabs.

In Eastern towns may still be seen the professional letter-writer, having an ink-horn stuck in his girdle as in the days of Ezekiel (ix. 2, 3, 11). He is "a ready writer" (Psalm xlv. 2). So he places paper on his hand and writes to dictation, sometimes without sitting. Then the letter or petition is sealed with the ring which nearly every peasant wears. There are many references in the Bible to this use of a ring. Pharaoh gave his ring to Joseph as a sign that he could act in his stead (Genesis xli. 42). Jeremiah speaks of a signet upon the right hand (xxii. 24). An open letter like that which Sanballat sent to Nehemiah (vi. 5) would be considered an insult now as it was then. Letters in the East are always sealed. (See Jeremiah xxxii. 10; Daniel vi. 17.)

In the town of Tunis we saw many shops like enlarged rabbit-hutches, in which coppersmiths worked. No doubt Alexander the coppersmith, who "did" St. Paul "much evil" (2 Timothy iv. 14), plied his trade in the same sort of little workshop. One still sees moneychangers sitting at tables, and if a man wants to change coin he produces it from a napkin like that in which the unprofitable servant hid his one talent.

Eastern people are not so foolish as to stand when they might sit. Workers in shops and offices sit. "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver" (Malachi iii. 3). St. Matthew "was sitting at the place of toll" when called (Matthew ix. 9). In the temple Jesus found the changers of money sitting and overthrew the seats of them that sold doves (Matthew xxi. 12; Mark xi. 15; John ii. 14). The "changers of money" are now called *sarafs*. They sit in the open air at tables or stands, on which are trays divided into compartments for the different coins. And many of them are "robbers," like their predecessors who were so called by our Lord. They give insufficient exchange for foreign money and extort exorbitant interest on loans.

The ancient Egyptians used to deposit money at their funeral rites in the tombs of kings and nobles. Treasure buried at Tyre was lately dug up. When Achan was questioned about the things he had stolen from the doomed spoil of Jericho, he confessed, "Behold they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it" (Joshua vii. 21).

Photo by] [*F. W. McLellan.*

SITTING AT WORK.

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The produce of the land in Syria is sometimes stored in large jars underground. Ten out of the eighty men whom the conspirator Ishmael was about to slay escaped by promising to disclose buried possessions : " Slay us not ; for we have stores hidden in the field, of wheat, and of barley, and of oil, and of honey " (Jeremiah xli. 8). The slothful servant in the Parable " digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money " (Matthew xxv. 18). Money was also put in earthenware jars, and these were buried. Perhaps St. Paul alluded to this custom when, speaking of the light of God, he said, " We have this treasure in earthen vessels " (2 Corinthians iv. 7). Silver shekels were found buried near Jericho in 1873.

There was a tradition that great treasure had been buried near the Joppa Gate at Jerusalem, and to secure it some adventurers asked for and obtained permission to make a road at the place. In time of war, or to escape the extortion of tax-collectors, Easterns often bury money and jewels. In India, during the Mutiny, treasures were hidden in the strangest places. Immense hoards were built into walls, or buried in fields and sown over with crops. In Palestine, a man who has no safe place in which to deposit his money buries it, and so honeycombed has the country become in thousands of years with hidden treasure that there are men who make a business of seeking for it. Our Lord, then, would be easily understood when He spoke of a person selling all that he had to buy a field in which he knew treasure was hid (Matthew xiii. 44).

The Unvarying East

In Acts xix. 24 we are told that the making of models in silver of the temple of Diana at Ephesus "brought no little business to the craftsmen." I have often seen the sale on festival days of similar models of a celebrated temple in China or of a cathedral in Roman Catholic countries at the doors of the buildings. There are many who by this business have their wealth.

CELEBRATED CITIES

CHAPTER IV

CELEBRATED CITIES

I AM glad that I saw Jerusalem before it was modernised as it is at present. Now, the suburbs that are irreverently called "The New Jerusalem" harmonise badly with the city of David and of David's Lord. Everywhere the modern is obliterating the ancient. For tourists to enter the city in a railway train instead of upon camels or asses, as formerly, would have been a sign and a wonder to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but what would these patriarchs have thought if they could have looked into the future and seen personally conducted parties driving to Europeanised hotels and sending telephone and telegraph messages?

Since our Lord was in Jerusalem in bodily form the city has been taken in war and more or less destroyed seven times. The Jerusalem of His day lies many feet below the present surface; even the lines of the ancient streets must be different, in many cases, from those of the modern ones. There is little now to justify the words "Beautiful in eleva-

tion, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion. Go round about her : tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces " (Psalm xlviii. 2, 12, 13). The towers of Zion only exist in the modern representatives of one or two of them, and the tourist asks in vain to be shown her bulwarks and palaces. And yet to see that Holy City, even though the exact spots of Christ's death and resurrection are unknown, is to give a new force to His name, whenever afterwards we hear it in Church, or read it in the Bible.

Ancient Jerusalem obtained water from three reservoirs, called Solomon's Pools, near Bethlehem, where also is a spring, thought to be the Sealed Fountain of Canticles iv. 12. Two aqueducts brought the water to the city.

We read in 2 Chronicles xxxii. 3, 4, that when Sennacherib besieged Jerusalem Hezekiah " took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city . . . and they stopped all the fountains and the brook that flowed through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? " The traveller now does not find " much water," and is obliged to bring a bottle of water with him when making excursions around Jerusalem. If Milton had walked round Zion and had been able to see he would not have written

> " Flowery brooks beneath,
> That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow."

"There is a river," sings the Psalmist (xlvi. 4), "the streams whereof make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High." This brook that flowed "fast by the oracle of God" rises beneath the temple area, flows round what is now the Mosque of Omar, and feeds the Pool of Siloam. At the Feast of Tabernacles a golden vessel was filled daily from Siloam and carried up to the Temple, amidst music and jubilation. To this Isaiah alludes when he writes (xii. 3): "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

In modern times Jerusalem has depended on rainfall, but recently the old lower level aqueduct was repaired from the "Sealed Fountain" to Bethlehem, and a pipe laid thence to Jerusalem.

In ancient Jerusalem, as in Cairo and Damascus to-day, different trades were confined to particular streets (Nehemiah iii. 32). There is in Cairo almost an entire street of shoe shops, and the red leather of which most of the shoes is made is probably the same sort as the rams' skins dyed red which were offered for the tabernacle (Exodus xxxv. 7).

"Thus, saith the Lord God: this is Jerusalem: I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her" (Ezekiel v. 5). In latter times this passage was taken to mean that Jerusalem was actually the centre of the earth—a belief of which the memorial is yet preserved in the large round stone still kissed devoutly by Greek pilgrims in their portion of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

They believe that the dust from which Adam was made came from here.

Most people who have visited the Jews' wailing-place in Jerusalem know that with trembling lips and tearful eyes they chant these words from Isaiah (lxiv. 9–11): "Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: behold, look, we beseech Thee, we are all Thy people. Thy holy cities are become a wilderness, Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee is burned with fire; and all our pleasant things are laid waste."

We were shown "Solomon's stables," but the place did not look as if it could have contained "four thousand stalls for horses and chariots" (2 Chronicles ix. 25).

When King Herod had put St. James to death, he found that the deed of blood had made him popular with the Jews, and so he continued the persecution. He imprisoned St. Peter, and placed him in charge of sixteen soldiers. One night, as the Apostle was sleeping between two of these men, each of his wrists being fastened to a soldier by a coupling chain, an angel appeared and awoke the apostle. St. Peter's chains fell off, and he followed the angel until they came to the iron gate that led to the city, and this opened of its own accord. Those who have visited Jerusalem must remember the fine gate which is said to be the identical one through which St. Peter passed.

New Jerusalem of Revelation xxi. is modelled on an ancient city. It has "a wall great and high" and twelve gates. Jacob spoke of "the gate of heaven" (Genesis xxviii. 17). When one of the large gates in an Eastern town is closed for any reason, there is generally beside it a small gate through which a man can pass if he bow his head. Those whose business cannot wait for the big gate to be opened press on through the strait or small gate, as it is called. Our Lord referred to this fact when He said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate" (Matthew vii. 13). Such imagery would not be used now, for towns no longer have walls and gates, owing to the advance of civilisation or, it may be, of artillery.

In case we should fall amongst robbers in "going down" from Jerusalem to Jericho we took "soldiers to help us" (Ezra viii. 22). If we had not brought the soldiers with us and paid them they would probably have robbed us themselves. We were shown bits of the old road on which our Lord must have walked.

Not long after leaving Jerusalem we came to El Azariyeh, the place of Lazarus. This village of Lazarus and his sisters has in it now about twenty families.

Then the road follows the dry channel of a brook for several miles, and there are great rocks beside it behind which robbers could easily hide. There are no trees and only one house, said to be the inn to which the good Samaritan brought the wounded traveller. A little before arriving at Jericho we were shown "Elijah's fountain," where the prophet healed

bitter water, and the deep gorge of the brook Cherith, where a monastery marks the place where he hid himself. Jericho has about a hundred small houses and a tolerable hotel where we spent a night. In 2 Chronicles xxviii. 15, Jericho is called "the city of palm-trees"; but now there is not a palm-tree within miles of it.

The old walls and citadel of Jericho have been not long ago excavated. Jericho was a priestly city. It is said that at one time as many as twelve thousand priests and Levites lived in it. These had often to travel on the "Bloody Road" that led to Jerusalem. The road was so called because infested with murderous marauders.

The house shown at Jaffa as having been that of Simon the Tanner is certainly on the seashore, and in the courtyard is a spring of fresh water, such as must always have been needed for the purposes of tanning. It has a flat roof with a high parapet, and upon this roof we were told St. Peter's devotions took place. When the sea is rough, landing from the boats at Jaffa is difficult. Stalwart Arabs seized us; literally they did "bear us up in their hands" (Psalm xci. 12).

Apple, apricot, pomegranate, walnut, fig, and all kinds of trees grow around the city of Damascus, and this fact causes those who have travelled long over sandy deserts and scorched hills to think that they have got to Paradise when they come to it.

The gardens in the neighbourhood are fertilised by the River Barada, called Abanah in 2 Kings v. 12.

Photo by *J. W. McLellan.*

COURTYARD OF SIMON THE TANNER'S HOUSE.

To face p. 68.

Naaman's second river, the Pharpar, is some miles further south. The first Biblical thing we were shown was the Roman road on which St. Paul was approaching Damascus when his conversion took place. The mud walls of Damascus have disappeared except in detached portions, and on these houses are still built with windows projecting. It was from such a window that St. Paul was let down in a basket (Acts ix. 25). The supposed identical window was pointed out to us. Also a large overhanging rock under which the Apostle is said to have remained in hiding eight days before going to Jerusalem.

Then we walked along the street called "Straight," and some other streets, until we came to the house of "a certain disciple named Ananias," which is connected with the house of Judas by a tunnel.

St. Luke does not say the street which *is* straight, but the "street which is *called* Straight" (Acts ix. 11). Like every other visitor I noticed that the street is anything but straight.

We visited a leper hospital, where an old building is shown which is said to have been the house of Naaman the Syrian.

When we steamed past Tyre we could hardly realise that once its prince said, "I am a god: I sit in the seat of God" (Ezekiel xxviii. 2), or that it held out against Nebuchadrezzar until "every head" in his army "was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled" (Ezekiel xxix. 18). The walls of the "fenced city," as Joshua called Tyre (Joshua xix. 29), are destroyed and her towers

broken down, and it has become what Ezekiel said it would become (Ezekiel xxvi. 5)—"a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea."

When I was travelling in Greece and came near the station at Corinth I asked about the ancient city. I was told that nothing remained of it except six pillars, and that the site was some miles away. The inhabitants of the dusty, uninteresting successor of that ancient Corinth which was built of "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble," cannot understand why any one should care to visit the site of the old city. Those whom I consulted said, speaking a little French, a little English, a little Greek, and a good deal of shoulder-and-hand language, "Old Corinth nothing; only six pillars left, and a great hill to climb."

CHILDREN

CHAPTER V

CHILDREN

WHEN in Palestine a child is about to be born the father waits somewhere away from his home for news, for no man is allowed to remain in the house. If the child is a boy a friend hastens to announce the wished-for event. "Behold I bring you good tidings" (Luke ii. 10).

Jeremiah says (xx. 15): "Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad." The father would have been anything but glad if the child had been a girl. An Arab will in many cases divorce his wife if she be guilty of bringing a girl into the world. A husband of that nationality, anxious to be the father of a son, solemnly vowed that he would divorce his wife if she had a girl. Unfortunately she had twin daughters. The poor fellow, however, really loved his wife, and racked his brains to get out of his oath. At last he solved the difficulty. "I said I would divorce her if she had a daughter, but not if she had two"; and so he kept her. Our Lord (John xvi. 21) speaks of

the joy of a woman when a man is born into the world. I heard of a Syrian servant who made the announcement to his master when entertaining company: "A son is born to you," though the infant was really a girl. The servant had been ashamed, on his own and his master's account, to say, in the presence of strangers, that a daughter had been born. A girl will say when describing some small thing: "It is as little as was the rejoicing the day I was born." An Arab proverb says: "The threshold weeps forty days when a girl is born." The friends, especially the female friends of the father and mother, condole with the former and upbraid the latter, and a Syrian grandmother has been known to refuse to kiss her grandchild for many months because she was born a girl. In China female children are in many cases "cast out in the open field" (Ezekiel xvi. 5).

It is no wonder that Hannah prayed and wept for "a man child" (1 Samuel i. 10, 11). "The only son of his mother, and she a widow" (Luke vii. 12), would mean even more to Easterns than to us.

A daughter is so little valued in comparison to a son, because she loses her name and is lost to the family, while he carries on the name and strengthens the family. Fathers who have many sons and grandsons "shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate" (Psalm cxxvii. 5).

To celebrate the birth of a boy a feast is given, and the guests bring gifts to the child as the Magi did to the infant Jesus (Matthew ii. 11). In Syria

and Palestine it is still the custom to cover new-born children with salt. A native mother cannot imagine how any child is not thus favoured. "Poor thing," she will say, "it was not salted at all!"

It is to this custom that Ezekiel refers when he says: "Thou was not salted at all or swaddled at all" (Ezekiel xvi. 4). This is an Oriental way of saying that as a child, without the health-giving properties of salt, would not grow up strong, so Jerusalem would eventually corrupt and perish.

"Swaddling clothes," like those in which the new-born Saviour was "wrapped" (Luke ii. 7), are used by modern Eastern mothers. They are strips of calico about six inches wide and three yards long. With these a babe is bound into a small mummy-like bundle for forty days, and then they are removed and real clothes are put on. Job speaks of a swaddling band of darkness (xxxviii. 9).

When Abraham sent away Hagar he put her son on her shoulder (Genesis xxi. 14). It is a common sight in Egypt and Palestine to see a little boy sitting astride his mother's left shoulder, and steadying himself with his hands placed upon her head. Isaiah speaks of this mode of carrying children: "Thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders" (xlix. 22). Boys being, as we have said, more valued than girls, it is generally a boy and not a girl that a mother carries on her shoulder, but the prophet foretells a time when the former persecutors of Israel shall allow even her daughters to ride on their shoulders. Sometimes children are carried on the

hips of their mothers. "Ye shall be borne upon the side," says Isaiah, "and shall be dandled upon the knees" (lxvi. 12).

In Ruth iv. 15 a child is said to be a "restorer of life, and a nourisher of old age." This reminds us of the Chinese saying that trees are for shade and children for old age.

In Palestine children are seldom weaned under two years of age, and sometimes not until they are four or five. When Hannah weaned Samuel he was probably old enough to be left with the aged Eli and to do some little service in the Lord's house (1 Samuel i. 21–23). A man-child, especially if he be an only one, can generally talk and walk when he is weaned—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou established strength" (Psalm viii. 2). "The sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the basilisk's den" (Isaiah xi. 8). And in xxviii. 9 Isaiah asks, "Whom will ye teach knowledge? and whom will he make to understand the message? Them that are weaned from milk, and drawn from the breasts?" Almost all Eastern boys can understand what is said to them when "drawn from the breasts."

The Psalmist says (cxxxi. 2): "I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with his mother, my soul is with me like a weaned child." What the writer means to express is that he is meek and gentle like a child of three or four years of age, and not like the helpless and unintelligent infant that

we understand by a "weaned child." (See Matthew xviii. 2–4.)

In Isaiah xiii. 16 it is said: "Their infants shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes." During the Boxer trouble in 1900 Russian soldiers dashed to pieces Chinese infants.

In the time of Christ Jewish children were from an early age familiar with the Scriptures, not only in the popular language, but also in the Hebrew, and this explains why the presence of a child of twelve in the midst of the doctors hearing and asking them questions would not under ordinary circumstances attract any special attention.

People brought their children to Jesus "that He should lay His hands on them, and pray" (Matthew xix. 13), and the Arabs of to-day bring their little children to a distinguished stranger to be touched by him. They believe that the touch will confer a blessing upon them.

CLOTHES AND ORNAMENTS

CHAPTER VI

CLOTHES AND ORNAMENTS

ALMOST everything in the Holy Land is unlike what it is in England and America ; but in nothing do we differ so much from Easterns as in our covering. They allow hair to grow on their faces but shave their heads. Men, women, and children wear long, loose, and flowing garments. And there are no changes of fashion. People dress as did their great-great-great-great-grandparents and as all of their own condition of life dress. How indicative this of the conservativeness of Bible lands ! If fashion in clothes, even of the clothes of women, does not change, nothing does. It was, no doubt, with the broad Eastern cloak of common wear that Shem and Japheth covered their father (Genesis ix. 23).

On the approach of Isaac, Rebekah " took her veil and covered herself " (Genesis xxiv. 65). This is always done when a man, especially a stranger, is seen coming.

Boaz said to Ruth (iii. 15) : " Bring the mantle that is upon thee, and hold it ; and she held it : and he measured six measures of barley, and laid

it on her." The substitution of "mantle" in the Revised Version for the "veil" of the Authorised Version takes away the difficulty of understanding how six measures of barley could be put into a veil.

What is the connection between a veil and a train? you may have asked yourself when you read in Isaiah, "Remove thy veil; strip off the train" (xlvii. 2), but you knew when you went to Tunis and saw women wearing white sheets over their heads which covered their faces and made a train down at their feet.

"Rebekah took the goodly raiment of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son" (Genesis xxvii. 15). "Goodly raiment" means richly coloured, gold-embroidered cloaks like those worn now in Damascus and other Eastern places on festal occasions. Flowing clothes might be said to be "put upon" a person. The "coat of many colours" which Jacob gave to Joseph was parti-coloured, had sleeves and came down to the feet. It marked higher rank, as it does now in China, and this aroused the jealousy of Joseph's brethren who wore the sleeveless, short coats of shepherds. It is still usual on high days in the East to dress favourite children in long robes of purple, scarlet, and other colours pieced together with great taste and embroidered with gold. Isaac "smelled" Jacob's clothes (Genesis xxvii. 27). Parents in India compare the smell of their child to that of a fragrant plant, and a good man is said

to have a sweet smell. The Japanese and some other Oriental people drop their shoes or raised wooden sandals on entering a room. As they sit on mats, rugs or divans with their feet under them, shoes would soil clothes and couch. Hence the idea of defilement by shoes, and the command given to Moses at the burning bush to put them off (Exodus iii. 5). No one is allowed to enter a Mohammedan mosque or shrine with boots on or without slippers being put on over them.

"And he [Saul] also stripped off his clothes, and he also prophesied before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets" (1 Samuel xix. 24). Indian fakeers and "prophets" generally wear no clothes. David when he danced prophet-like before the ark was, to the disgust of his wife, shamelessly uncovered (2 Samuel vi. 14, 16, 20–22). Isaiah put off his sackcloth or hairy mantle and "walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder" (xx. 3).

On occasions of ceremony clothes are considered to be very important in the East. "Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him, and gave it to David" (1 Samuel xviii. 4). Royal apparel was put upon Mordecai (Esther vi. 10). People put their garments under Jehu for a carpet on the bare stairs when they proclaimed him king (2 Kings ix. 13), and spread them in the way when our Lord rode into Jerusalem. In Psalm xlv. 13, 14, we are told that on her wedding-day the king's

daughter was clothed in "broidered work inwrought with gold," just the sort of "all glorious" dress which I have seen the wives of Chinese mandarins wearing.

How often in the Bible are changes of raiment mentioned! Rich Chinese have many of these—special clothes for every important occasion. One mandarin related with pride that when he went to a foreign country the Custom House officers would not believe that his multitudinous garments were all for his own use, and were not intended for sale. Oriental outer garments are all the same size and the fashion never changes. This is why they were suited for presents (Genesis xlv. 22; Judges xiv. 12–20; 2 Kings v. 22, 23).

"So Hanun took David's servants, and shaved them, and cut their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away" (1 Chronicles xix. 4). We do not realise the great indignity that was put upon these servants of David until we have seen the long dignified robes worn by Eastern officials. To cut their garments in the middle would make the wearers appear ridiculous if not immodest. A man in tight Western clothes could not do what St. Paul did in his long robe. When the Jews and Greeks "opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment" (Acts xviii. 6) with righteous indignation.

When we read in Matthew iii. 4 that John the Baptist "had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins," it means that he

was dressed not like a well-to-do priest, but like a poor peasant. The Baptist's dress was the bournouse of camel's hair cloth which the Bedouin now wears. It is like a sack, slit down the front, with a hole at each side for the arms, and is bound round the body by a leathern girdle. The girdle makes the "bosom" in which the peasant stows away what we would put into our pockets. This is the "bosom" to which our Lord referred. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom" (Luke vi. 38). You often see an Oriental shopkeeper measuring beans or flour into the bosom of a peasant. Sometimes a man holds up the ends of his garments and makes a lap into which he puts things (2 Kings iv. 39; Haggai ii. 12). Elijah tucked the ends of his long robe under his girdle preparatory to running before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel (1 Kings xviii. 46). The Baptist was shod with sandals like those which peasants wear in the Holy Land to-day, except when horrid yellow boots with spring sides have taken their place. Many peasants do not wear even sandals, and use their uncovered feet in some kinds of work almost as much as their hands. Thus a gardener opens with his foot a passage for the water in irrigation trenches, or closes it up when sufficient water has flowed through (Deuteronomy xi. 10). "If any man would go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also" (Matthew v. 40). The coat now called by Arabs "sulta" is an

inner garment, the cloak (jibbeh) an outer one. It was this cloak that the Saviour laid aside leaving the tunic, the ordinary dress of a servant, when He washed the feet of the disciples (John xiii. 4, 5). It was their cloaks which people in the Bible are said to rend when in grief or in a rage.

In the East differences are marked by dress far more than with us. How did the woman of Samaria know that Christ was a Jew? By His dress. Every man is known by his clothing, not only his race and creed, but his business, his position, and the part of the country from which he comes. "They which are gorgeously apparelled live in kings' courts" (Luke vii. 25). People desire, as did the scribes, to walk in long robes (Mark xii. 38), so that every one may know that they are not manual labourers. The Bedouins, whose only work is an occasional fight, wear long garments with sleeves reaching far beyond the tips of their fingers. When these banditti betake themselves to battle, they tie the two ends of their very long sleeves into a knot and throw it over their heads out of the way, thus illustrating Isaiah lii. 10. "The Lord hath made bare His holy arm," meaning that He is about to take action in behalf of His people.

"For this will I wail and howl, I will go stripped and naked" (Micah i. 8). Samaria, represented as a wealthy lady, laments her approaching degradation to the rank of a fellahhah, or peasant woman who may constantly be seen with arms, breast, and legs bare. "Jezebel painted her eyes, and tired her head,

Photo by] [*Bonfils.*

GIRLS WEARING CRESCENTS OF COINS.

To face p. 89.

and looked out at the window" (2 Kings ix. 30). "Lo, they came; for whom thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thine eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments" (Ezekiel xxiii. 40). Egyptian and other Eastern women still paint or blacken underneath their eyes with kohl to give to them an amorous look. The daughters of Zion showed their pride by mincing as they walked and by making a tinkling with their feet (Isaiah iii. 16, 18, 20). I understood this better when I saw the ornaments that are worn on their ankles by women in the East. Ezekiel (xvi. 12) represents Jehovah saying to personified Jerusalem: "I put a ring upon thy nose, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head." Nose-rings are worn to-day by Oriental women. Modern reproductions of Isaiah's crescents (iii. 18) are the spheres or tiaras that we see on the heads of women at Nazareth. They are composed of coins sewn upon cloth, and the woman in the parable swept her house diligently until she found the piece of money that she had lost, not so much because of its value, but because its absence spoiled the symmetry of her moon-shaped tire.

St. Paul preferred good works to braided hair, and St. Peter a meek and quiet spirit to plaited hair (1 Timothy ii. 9; 1 Peter iii. 3, 4). Compare with this the following from an old Chinese book of advice to women: "In arranging the head-dress, consider that the heart needs to be carefully regulated; in oiling the hair, resolve to make the heart pliable and docile." Jerusalem Jews grow earlocks;

that is, curls of hair in front of their ears, in deference to the Levitical prohibition: "Thou shalt not round the corners of your heads"; and Russian Jews wear in their synagogues phylacteries in fancied obedience to Deuteronomy vi. 8. "And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes." Phylacteries are two little leather boxes containing strips of vellum on which are written Exodus xiii. 2–10, 11–17, and Deuteronomy vi. 4–9, 13–22. One of these boxes is attached by leather bands to the left arm and the other to the forehead. The breadth of the phylacteries used by the Pharisees, of which our Lord spoke (Matthew xxiii. 5), referred to the little boxes themselves and to the thongs that held them, large and wide ones being used to attract attention.

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

CHAPTER VII

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

In the clear air of Palestine it is possible to hear and see much further than in our climate. Hence the Law heard by the people assembled on the hills, Ebal and Gerizim, when it was proclaimed at a distance of about two miles, and the view obtained by Moses from Mount Pisgah (Deuteronomy xxvii. 11-15; xxxiv. 1-4).

From May to October no rain falls in Palestine, and this is why the Israelites were so terrified when Samuel called down thunder and rain in wheat harvest (1 Samuel xii. 17, 18). During these months vegetation would cease if it were not for dew. No wonder that dew is highly appreciated. Isaac prayed that it might fall upon Esau's dwelling (Genesis xxvii. 39). Hosea (xiv. 5) represents the Almighty as saying, "I will be as the dew unto Israel," and Haggai (i. 10) as staying the heaven from dew. "My head is filled with dew, my locks with the drops of the night" (The Song of Songs v. 2). We have had our tents in that country wet with dew as if it were rain.

"Lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land" (The Song of Songs ii. 11, 12). That was written about a very different spring from ours in England—a spring that comes with a blaze of sunlight and with flowers, and no relapses into winter.

In England the wheat harvest is after summer, in Palestine before it, and the ant of the latter country is "exceeding wise," because she "gathereth her food in the harvest" (Proverbs vi. 8), that is to say, in April and May—six months before winter, when the gathered food would be needed. It is no wonder that the sluggard, wanting in industry and in forethought, was told to consider the ways of the ant.

Jeremiah, too, was quite accurate in the order of harvest and summer when he says: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (viii. 20).

The servant of Elijah reported to his master, "Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the sea, as small as a man's hand" (1 Kings xviii. 44). This is the quarter from which clouds come in Palestine. The Arabs call the west wind "the father of rain," because it brings up the clouds from "the Great Sea westward," that is to say, from the Mediterranean.

Hosea told Judah that her "goodness" was "as a morning cloud" (vi. 4). "The "morning cloud" consists of moisture from the Mediterranean

becoming condensed on passing over the colder night air of the land. In the British Isles we do not think much of clouds because we see so many of them ; but, in the Holy Land, where there is always blue sky except during the short period of the winter rains, a cloud is a welcome rarity. Hence the use, so to speak, to which the seldom-seen cloud is put in scriptural imagery. It is used to add solemnity and make a scene more impressive. A cloud, we are told, sheltered the Israelites as they journeyed through the burning valleys of Sinai (Exodus xiii. 21 ; Numbers x. 34 ; Psalm cv. 39). A cloud descended on Sinai when God showed Himself (Exodus xix. 16, xxiv. 15). A cloud overshadowed the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew xvii. 5). A cloud received the ascending Saviour (Acts i. 9), and His disciples expected that He would come again in the clouds (Matthew xxiv. 30 ; Mark xiii. 26 ; Luke xxi. 27).

Easterns, however, appreciate the sun as much as they do clouds. They believe that he rises with healing in his wings (Malachi iv. 2). A sick Arab when told to go to bed replies, "No ! the sun is better ;" and he takes a sun bath. Arabs think that the proverb "Where the sun comes in the doctor goes out" is a true one. "Truly the light is sweet" to them, and "great darkness" the "horror" ; it was to Abraham (Genesis xv. 12).

"Dost thou know," asks Job (xxxvii. 17), "how thy garments are warm, when the earth is still by reason of the south wind?" Those of us who have

felt this damp, hot wind in Egypt or Malta do know this, and also the meaning of Isaiah xxv. 5 : "As the heat in a dry place shalt thou bring down the noise of strangers ; as the heat by the shadow of a cloud." When a Khamsin or a Sirocco blows people go into their houses and shut every door and window. Flocks and herds take shelter in caves and behind rocks. Fowls pant under walls with open beaks and drooping wings. Very effectually hot winds bring down noise and quiet the earth, and the most intolerable heat is "heat by the shadow of a cloud." Noise is brought down, too, by people ceasing to work, as they do at noon, in hot countries. This is the reason Jeremiah (vi. 4, xv. 8) terrified by predicting judgments as falling at noon.

In 1837 the earth in Palestine swallowed up people as it did "all the men that appertained unto Korah" (Numbers xvi. 32).

Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are often alluded to by Psalmists and Prophets. "He bowed the heavens and came down ; and thick darkness was under His feet. He looks on the earth, and it trembleth : He touches the mountains and they smoke. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed" (Psalm xviii. 7–15). "The earth shall stagger like a drunken man, and shall be moved to and fro like a hut" (Isaiah xxiv. 20). "Shall not the land tremble for this? . . . it shall rise up wholly like the River ; and it shall be troubled and sink again, like the River of Egypt" (Amos viii. 8).

Photo by [illegible] *Banff.*

FISHING-BOAT ON THE SEA OF GALILEE.

Towards the end of the rainy season of 1893 some thirty pilgrims died on the road between Jerusalem and Nablous from exhaustion caused by the inclemency of the weather.

"And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain" (1 Kings xviii. 41). The rain with which the Palestine summer breaks up is heralded by a whistling, roaring wind, and the more noise the wind makes the heavier is the shower that follows.

Once when the present writer lived in Hong Kong there was a sound of many waters indeed. It rained in one day and night as much as it generally does in a whole year in Great Britain. The waters rushed down the hills like Niagaras, carrying with them all the Chinese houses that were too flimsy to stand the test.

Our Lord must have had such irresistible rain-floods in His mind when He spoke of the foolish man who "built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell" (Matthew vii. 27; Luke vi. 49).

Storms frequently take place on the Sea of Galilee. "My experience in this region," writes Dr. Thomson ("The Land and the Book," part ii. ch. 25), "enables me to sympathise with the disciples in their long night's contest with the wind. I spent a night in that Wady Shukalyif, some three miles up it to the left of us. The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake, and

it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore next morning the face of the lake was like a huge boiling caldron."

COMMANDMENTS AND LAWS

CHAPTER VIII

COMMANDMENTS AND LAWS

In Genesis ix. 4 it is said, "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." Many Eastern people, when they shoot even a small bird, cut its throat, and "pour out the blood thereof." They keep themselves "from what is strangled, and from blood" (Acts xv. 29).

When we see marks of their gods on the foreheads of Hindoos we realise what a valuable means of instruction Moses found in the custom of tatooing. "And it shall be for a sign upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt" (Exodus xiii. 16). This does not contradict Leviticus xix. 28, for the "cuttings" and "marks" there forbidden had, no doubt, an idolatrous meaning. Jehovah says of Zion, "I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands" (Isaiah xlix. 16). (See Revelation ix. 4, xiii. 17, xiv. 1, 9, xx. 4.)

Eastern people sleep out of doors in summer and in the same clothes they wear during the day. This fact was provided for: "If thou at all take thy neighbour's garment to pledge, thou shalt restore it unto

him by that the sun goeth down : for that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin : wherein shall he sleep? " (Exodus xxii. 26, 27). A traveller not long ago took and kept the cloak which a thief dropped when pursued. The sheikh came to the traveller and asked him to give back the cloak, saying that it was the man's covering for the night, and that if he died from exposure to the cold the traveller would be held responsible. It was also unlawful to take a millstone for a pledge (Deuteronomy xxiv. 6).

Obelisks of the heathen, like those which the Israelites were frequently ordered to destroy, are to be seen in many places still. They were connected with phalic worship and the sacrifice of children, and as such were " abominations."

" Thou shalt not seethe a kid in its mother's milk " (Exodus xxiii. 19, xxxiv. 26 ; Deuteronomy xiv. 21). This command given three times was perhaps intended to cultivate humane feelings in the Israelites. A favourite dish with Arabs is a kid stewed with sour milk, onions and spices. They call it *Leben immû*—" Kid in his mother's milk."

The Levitical laws about things clean and unclean resemble the caste regulations of India, and are the foundation of European sanitary science. " Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man " (Leviticus xix. 32). " Elihu waited to speak, because they were elder than he " (Job xxxii. 4). Too little attention is now paid in the West to such precept and practice.

Commandments and Laws

The Israelites were told to write the commandments of God upon the posts of their houses, and upon their gates (Deuteronomy vi. 9, xi. 20). Before their great festival of New Year's Day the Chinese paste appropriate inscriptions on red paper upon door-posts, junks, farm implements, and upon almost everything. When the Jews were not afraid of their enemies they literally engraved the " laws of the Lord " on their gates and door-posts ; when they desired to be less conspicuous they wrote some of these laws on small rolls of parchment, enclosed the rolls in cases and inserted them into niches in the door-posts, or into the plaster upon them.

" There shall not be found with thee any one that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer " (Deuteronomy xviii. 10). All these sort of people are at the present time in Chinese cities. In every important street there is one who tells fortunes and the lucky day for any undertaking, who reveals the place of hidden treasure, stolen goods and the like, who is proficient in spirit-rappings and all other tricks of " wise men " or magicians. Such " dealers in lies " seek their answers from the stars or consult almanacks and other books not unlike the books of " curious arts " that converts burned at Ephesus (Acts xix. 19). The late Empress Dowager of China guided her everyday actions by the words of astrologers and prophets, by dreams, and by Urim.

The landmarks of the Israelites were not fences or

hedges or walls, but only "stones of boundary," and because they were so easily removed and the fraud so difficult to detect, a forbidding sacredness was attached to them. Those who removed them to enlarge their properties were considered accursed (Deuteronomy xix. 14, xxvii. 17). The same easy system of marking property still prevails in China.

"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fallen down by the way, and hide thyself from them; thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again" (Deuteronomy xxii. 4). The animals would often fall then for the same reason that they fall now; that is to say, from being too heavily laden. The Holy Land is certainly not holy in its treatment of dumb animals.

"When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence" (Deuteronomy xxii. 8). The roofs of houses in the East are flat; people spend much time upon them, and store there corn and other things (Joshua ii. 6). Samuel communed with Saul upon the house-top (1 Samuel ix. 25). David was walking on the roof of his house when he saw Bath-sheba making her toilet, and fell in love with her (2 Samuel xi. 2). Isaiah asks (xxii. 1), "What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?" As Oriental houses generally have no windows looking into the streets, or only ones that are closely latticed, the roofs are the best places for seeing what is going on, so when anything extraordinary happens people

rush up to the housetops. We read in Zephaniah i. 5 of those "that worship the host of heaven upon housetops."

"What ye have spoken in the ear in the inner chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops" (Luke xii. 3). The public crier sometimes makes his announcements from a housetop, and from the same vantage-ground an enraged Chinese woman will shame a husband or a mother-in-law by proclaiming her grievances to the street.

"When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel" (Deuteronomy xxiii. 24). I have been in Spain, Italy, and Switzerland during the vintage season, and found that law and custom differed in different places in this matter. In Switzerland there is a fine for plucking even a bunch: in Italy you are generally welcome to them.

Any one passing by standing corn was allowed to pluck ears and eat (Deuteronomy xxiii. 25). What the Pharisees said was not lawful was to do this on the Sabbath day. It was a form of work, for it was, as the Talmud said, making a mill of the hands. (See John v. 10.)

In the Book of Ecclesiastes (v. 2) the rash talker about God is commanded to refrain: "God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few." The Hindoos, after speculating and talking much about God, have come to the conclusion that the only word which can safely be used about

Him is No :—No. Christians believe that the Lord Jesus has showed to us the Father, but still our words in reference to the Cause of causes, the Mystery of mysteries, should be few.

> "He is unknown to those who think they know,
> And known to those who know they know Him not."

"But I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil ; but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew v. 39). It is often said that if this and similar commands given in the Sermon on the Mount were literally obeyed Society would come to an end. This is our Western unimaginative way of looking at the matter. In Oriental teaching things are often stated in a paradoxical, exaggerated parabolic way to arrest attention. They are a guide to the spirit to be cultivated and not intended to be literally interpreted. That this was the case in our Lord's teaching about non-resistance is shown by the fact that He enjoined insistence on social justice as well as personal meekness. The wild instinct of revenge must be subdued, but the moral order of Society must also be maintained. An offending brother is to be told his fault by you first alone, then before witnesses. "If he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the Church : and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as a Gentile, and a publican."

CUSTOMS

CHAPTER IX

CUSTOMS

CIRCUMCISION was used in Egypt before Abraham's day, and it is in use at present amongst Coptic and Abyssinian Christians. Mohammed was himself circumcised, and the practice prevails wherever the Mohammedan faith has extended.

Those of us who have frequently seen men in the East showing sorrow by cries and tears read as a natural thing that "Esau lifted up his voice and wept" (Genesis xxvii. 38).

We need not commiserate Jacob for sleeping out of doors with a stone for his pillow at Bethel (Genesis xxviii. 18), for we see Arabs now sleeping in the open, and, in the warm weather, preferring to do so. They draw the hoods of their grey and brown striped cloaks over their heads, and this prevents a stone from being a too hard pillow. David found Saul sleeping "within the place of the wagons with his spear stuck in the ground at his head" (1 Samuel xxvi. 7). A sheikh's tent is marked by a spear or small flag stuck in front of it. And when a man sleeps out of doors in summer there is invariably

a goulah, or bottle of water, beside him, such as Saul had (1 Samuel xxvi. 11).

"But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord" (2 Samuel xi. 9). In India it is usual for servants to sleep at the door of their master's house or room.

In the North of China where it is very cold in winter, a whole family—parents, children, and sometimes even servants—sleep together on a sort of platform over a stove. This illustrates what the man in the parable said, "The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed" (Luke xi. 7). An Eastern family bed only means a large mat.

Jacob said that he would appease Esau with a present (Genesis xxxii. 20). A present (backsheesh) is a great factor in Eastern life. Generally a "tip" is a cowardly concession to mendacious mendicity, but it is sometimes the expression of approval. It was the latter when every one of Job's relations and acquaintances brought to the vindicated Heaven-approved hero a piece of money and a ring of gold (Job xlii. 11). (See 1 Kings x. 10, 25.)

In the East men embrace each other on occasions if they are intimate. Each places his right hand on his friend's left shoulder and kisses his right cheek, then his left hand on his right shoulder and kisses his left cheek. Esau fell on Jacob's neck and kissed him, and Joseph upon Benjamin's (Genesis xxx. 4, xlv. 14).

Moses kissed his father-in-law, and David and Jonathan kissed one another (Exodus xviii. 7;

1 Samuel xx. 41). "Absalom stood beside the gate: and it was so, that when any man came nigh to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand and took hold of him, and kissed him" (2 Samuel xv. 2, 5). He treated him as a friend and an equal, as we should say, "shook hands" with him, for kissing in the East means no more than this.

Our Lord said to Simon the Pharisee, "Thou gavest me no kiss" (Luke vii. 45). The snobbish host did not give the customary greeting to his guest because he was afraid of appearing to be intimate with a supposed uneducated common person, with a "carpenter's son."

The elders of the Church at Ephesus "fell on Paul's neck and kissed him" (Acts xx. 37). And the apostle himself said to the Romans (xvi. 16), "Salute one another with a holy kiss." It went without saying that men should give this "kiss of greeting" or "kiss of peace" only to men, and women only to women, for in the East the two sexes are never together in public. A limitation like this was too well understood to need to be stated.

On different occasions a pupil may be seen kissing the hem of a Rabbi's garment. An Arab Ymrâm allowed Niebuhr to do this as a great honour, and even extended his hand to be kissed on the back and on the palm. In the Bible and on Egyptian monuments kings are represented as requiring conquered princes to kiss their feet or, as Isaiah expresses it, to lick the dust of them (xlix. 23).

When a Chinese mandarin sees one of higher

rank approaching, he goes down a back street, or tries in some other way to evade ceremonial salutations, which are very tedious. When two Arab acquaintances meet they lay their right hands first on their hearts, then on their mouths, and then on their foreheads, to symbolise that their hearts, their voices, and their brains are at their friend's service. Then they hold hands and express interest in each other's fathers, grandfathers, and ancestry generally. It was delaying and distracting salutations of this description that Elisha and our Lord forbad (2 Kings iv. 29 ; Luke x. 4).

"And Saul eyed David from that day and forward" (1 Samuel xviii. 9). Is not this an allusion to the influence which the eye was, and is now thought to have? We sometimes say, "If looks could kill" ; but Orientals think that looks do kill ; that an eye flashing envy and hatred can bewitch and ruin. In the interior of China if a mother see an European about to pass her child she will rush forward, seize the child, cover him up, and bring him into her house lest he should be "eyed."

When we honour Queen Alexandra as the King's mother we are doing what Solomon did (1 Kings ii. 19).

Official staves are much more used by Orientals than by us. The head-man of a village carries one on important occasions. So does a Jewish Rabbi in Jerusalem. Mohammedans believe that if a Dervish strike the ground with his sacred stick round the bed of a sick man a cure will be affected.

This illustrates Elisha's giving Gehazi his staff to lay it on the face of the dead son of the Shunammite woman (2 Kings iv. 29). When Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and it became a serpent, the magicians also had rods "and they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods" (Exodus vii. 10–12).

When the Duke of Connaught visited one of the villages in the Soudan, the head-man apologised for the state of the road, and said that if his Royal Highness had given longer notice of his coming they would have made a new road for him. A former incumbent of Christ Church, Jerusalem, thus writes: "Having to ride to Shechem (Nablous) just before a Russian Grand Duke was expected to come that way, I found, to my comfort, that the road, generally so full of ups and downs and big stones, had been made smooth." The same incentive to road-making was given by the coming of a prince in the time of Isaiah (xl. 3, 4, lxii. 10). Herodotus (ix. 108–112) says that Xerxes on one occasion promised with an oath to give to a girl who had pleased him whatever she asked. She asked a splendid cloak he was wearing which had been woven for him by his wife. Partly from liking for the cloak, but more for fear of his wife, he would not consent to this, but to honour his oath he gave her a city, and a vast sum in gold, and a military force which she alone should command. This illustrates the Herod and Herodias incident (Matthew xiv. 6–12).

"Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass in your

purses (girdles) ; no wallet for your journey, neither two coats, nor shoes, nor staff : for the labourer is worthy of his food " (Matthew x. 9). In the same country now people who go on a journey where they will obtain hospitality amongst friends make frequently no better provision for it than this. They do not encumber themselves with two coats. They are accustomed to sleep even out of doors in the garments they have during the day ; they wear a coarse shoe, similar to the sandal of the ancients, but never take two pair of them.

" And He said unto them, When I sent you out without purse, and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. And He said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet : and he that hath none, let him sell his cloak and buy a sword. . . . And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough " (Luke xxii. 35, 36, 38).

To some it seems a difficulty that the Prince of Peace should have commanded His followers to provide themselves with weapons of war. If He had not done so, however, He would have been asking His disciples to invite the attack of the robbers and wild beasts that in those days, even more than now, infested the country through which they were to journey. In the present day almost every native traveller is armed, generally with an old-fashioned gun or with a spear or a sword, and the fact that in Old Testament times weapons of war were even more used shows that the Israelites must have been

humbled indeed when the Philistines would not allow any man of them to have a sword or a spear (1 Samuel xiii. 19-22).

Our Lord breathed on His disciples (John xx. 22). This is done by Eastern teachers to show their love and impart their spirit.

It is a custom in Syria to cover over any blood spilled on the ground. This may be done to prevent the suspicion of an act of violence causing "fury to come up to take vengeance." The custom is as old as Leviticus, where, in xvii. 13, the huntsman is enjoined to "pour out the blood" of any beast or fowl and "cover it with dust." Job cried out, "O earth, cover not thou my blood" (xvi. 18); and Ezekiel, speaking of Jerusalem, said, "Her blood is in the midst of her; she set it upon the bare rock; she poured it not upon the ground to cover it with dust" (xxiv. 7).

In Psalm xl. 7 and in Jeremiah xxxvi. 2 mention is made of a "roll of a book." Ancient books were rolled up like maps. If we go into a synagogue we see the books of the law in this shape now. In the synagogue of Nazareth "there was delivered" unto our Lord "the book (roll) of the prophet Isaiah" (Luke iv. 17).

"No prophet is acceptable in his own country" (Luke iv. 24). Professor Wilson thus wrote: "As the northern Highlanders do not admire 'Waverley,' so I presume, the South Highlanders despise 'Guy Mannering.' The Westmoreland peasants think Wordsworth a fool."

It is common for religious heathen in India to make vows and give offerings to some deity or saint, and, as a sign that they have done so, to shave their own and their children's heads. This explains Acts xxi. 23, 24.

A missionary bishop in China related the following to me. He had at one time translated the New Testament into the Chinese that was understood in his diocese, and when doing so he used every now and then to call together natives, both Christian and heathen, and read to them his work as far as it had gone. When he had finished reading the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, in which St. Paul describes ancient heathen customs, one intelligent Chinese remarked, "The rest of your work you may have done in England, but what you have just now read so perfectly describes China, that it must have been written in that country."

DEATH AND BURIAL

CHAPTER X

DEATH AND BURIAL

JACOB made Joseph swear that he would bury him in the grave which he, Jacob, had digged for himself in Canaan (Genesis l. 5). Barzillai said to David, "Let thy servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in mine own city, by the grave of my father and my mother" (2 Samuel xix. 37). To do this is the desire of all Chinese who go abroad. They get written promises from the captains of the ships in which they sail that if they die on the voyage their bones will be brought back to China. The Australians say that a Chinaman will not give even his old worn-out body to manure their land.

The ceremonies at the interments of Li Hung Chang, or of the Empress Dowager of China, illustrate the "great and sore lamentation" that took place when Jacob was buried (Genesis l. 10). Describing the funeral of a sheikh which he saw near where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were buried, Dr. Thomson writes: "There was a very great concourse of people. . . . The male and female mourners occupied different positions in the cemetery.

The females arranged themselves in three concentric rings. . . . They marched round chanting a monotonous dirge, or at times screaming or wailing in assumed frenzy. The male mourners sat aloof, and were less demonstrative in their sorrow, their lamentations being mostly limited to fresh outbursts at the approach of any party of friends from a distance" ("The Land and the Book," p. 245).

When Aaron and Moses died the Israelites wept for each of them thirty days (Numbers xx. 29; Deuteronomy xxxiv. 8). Our Lord had in view the thirty days' mourning implied in burying a father, and the consequences of indecision, when He answered as He did the man who asked to be allowed to bury his father before becoming a follower (Luke ix. 59, 60).

A pious Jew, in Deuteronomy xxvi. 14, says, "I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither put away thereof, being unclean, nor given thereof for the dead." This means that he had not diverted the tithes, or tenths, which should be given to God to any other purpose, not even when he was at the great expense which death and mourning entail. Feasts for the dead are repeated at stated times for forty days, and priests and other functionaries have to be remunerated. The funeral of the late Empress Dowager of China cost £125,000.

The Hebrews "raised a great heap of stones unto this day," over Achan, near Ai, "at the entering of the gate," when Joshua took the city (Joshua vii. 26).

To heap stones upon the graves of the unworthy,

or on a spot where a wicked deed was done is an Oriental practice. There is a large cairn at Damascus which was made by every passer-by for generations adding a stone to it. "And Joshua rent his clothes . . . he and the elders of Israel; and they put dust upon their heads" (Joshua vii. 6). "Anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that mourned for the dead" (2 Samuel xiv. 2). Conventional Oriental grief takes such forms as ceasing to wash, wallowing in ashes, shaving heads and cutting beards, wearing sackcloth. (See Ezekiel xxvii. 30.) Outside a house is heard howling, not of dogs but of women "skilful of lamentation." They are hired to "take up a wailing and make much ado" for one who lies dead in the house.

At funerals these mourning cunning women, as Jeremiah (ix. 17) calls them, throw about their arms, beat their breasts, tear their hair, and generally dramatise woe. They shriek out fond, if sometimes foolish, allusions to stimulate the sorrow of those around just as they did in Jeremiah's day—"Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! Ah lord! or, Ah his glory!" (Jeremiah xxii. 18).

"And it was a custom that the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah" (Judges xi. 39). Similar annual visits are paid now by Arabs to the tombs of saints.

"Put thou my tears into thy bottle" (Psalm lvi. 8). An acquaintance of the writer living in China has collected a number of coloured glass lachrymatories, or bottles in which tears were kept.

For seven days in a mourning family in China no food is cooked. Food is sent by neighbours to the bereaved people to give them leisure to mourn. This is a counterpart to "the cup of consolation" which Jeremiah (xvi. 7) says was given to comfort mourners for the loss of their father and mother, and to "the bread of men" which Ezekiel was forbidden to eat when his wife died (Ezekiel xxiv. 17).

When I lived in China I noticed that cemeteries are situated on hills near the towns, which reminded me of the words of Ezekiel: "Her graves are round about her" (Ezekiel xxxii. 25).

The tombs of Egypt and Palestine now are similar to the tombs at the time of the patriarchs. Most of them consist of a square or oblong room cut in a rock with niches for the bodies extending six or seven feet into the rocks. They are cut either from the top of the rock or in the side. Most Eastern people are more careful to keep the graves of their friends in a clean and tidy condition than we are in the West. When our Lord compared the Scribes and Pharisees to whited sepulchres the tombs had, no doubt, been whitened afresh for the Passover, which was at hand, just as at the present time Moslem tombs receive a new coat of whitewash at the approach of the feast of Ramadan. This must have given a freshness to our Lord's comparison.

Our Lord also told the Pharisees that they were "as the tombs which appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not" (Luke xi. 44). In Egypt to-day we sometimes walk over old burial-

grounds where all signs of the tombs that once were there have disappeared. The winds have brought sands from the desert to bury the remains of men and their works, and to rebury them when exhumed.

In warm countries people are too lazy to bury dead beasts. They leave them to be eaten by dogs or vultures or to be dried up and deodorised by the sun. Behind the place where a bull-fight took place in the South of Spain I have seen dozens of horses "drawn and cast forth," and the sight reminded me of the words of Jeremiah, "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (xxii. 19).

DISEASE

CHAPTER XI

DISEASE

THE regulations of Moses concerning the plague of leprosy in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Leviticus are in many respects more enlightened than are some of those of modern times in reference to sanitation and quarantine.

The first time we see lepers in the East we are shocked and sickened. I saw the loathsome sight for the first time on the West River, near Canton. At one place some of these miserable wretches live each one by himself in a little boat, and they are given a trifle of money occasionally by the steamship company for looking after the buoys that mark the track. The lepers are not allowed to come near a ship, so the captain of the steamer has the small coins tied up between two pieces of board and throws them to the lepers in the river.

In China lepers live by themselves in huts like dog-houses, and when they beg they reach out long sticks having baskets fastened to the end of them. No healthy person will touch lepers, eat with them, or use any of their clothes or utensils.

Leprosy is a living death. "These four are counted as dead," says the Talmud,—"the blind, the leper, the poor, and the childless." Uzziah, although he was a king, lived in a lazar house, because he was a leper (2 Chronicles xxvi. 21). "Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth" (Zechariah xiv. 12). These words might serve as a description of lepers.

The leper is dead while he lives. The hair falls from his head and eyebrows; his eyes, nose, and tongue are slowly consumed; his gums are absorbed, and his teeth disappear; unearthly sounds gurgle through his throat, for his palate has departed. Then his nails loosen, decay, and fall away, his fingers and toes shrivel up and drop off. You must see these hairless, eyeless, noseless, handless, human pieces of living decay to understand what an act of love Jesus Christ performed when He touched the leper.

The Law attached ceremonial pollution to a leper's touch, but the hand of Jesus was not polluted by touching the leper, while the leper's whole body was cleansed by the touch of that holy hand.

Naaman the Syrian was angry at the simplicity of Elisha's method of cleansing him from leprosy. He thought that the prophet ought to have done what all the medicine-men he had heard of did, and what they do now. He should have come in state to meet him, taken a grand pose, and made mysterious movements with his hands over Naaman's leprous sores.

Photo by] *[F. H. Mclellan*

LEPERS.

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"Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper" (2 Kings v. 11).

At the entrance to most Eastern villages there is an ash-heap or dust-heap such as that to which Job betook himself in his affliction (Job ii. 8). It is formed from the ashes which remain after the periodical burning of all kinds of refuse. The sufferer from a loathsome disease like leprosy, when shut out from human dwellings, makes his bed on it. As in the description of the poor man Lazarus, the wild pariah dogs, by licking his sores, alone seem to sympathise with him. The bed of sickness or of poverty on, or, in shelter of the village dunghill (Psalms cxiii. 7), is rendered less unpleasant by the strong sun which dries and deodorises the dunghill.

The two plagues inflicted on the Philistines for detaining the ark (1 Samuel v. 9) are still among local visitations; the habits of the people leading very often to the internal tumours, called emerods in the Scripture narrative, and armies of field-mice not unfrequently ravaging the crops.

Images of the emerods and of the mice were sent by the Philistines with the ark to propitiate the Hebrew God (1 Samuel vi. 4, 5). This practice is still observed in Greek and Roman Catholic churches, where silver models of arms, eyes, or legs, or models of ships are put up in gratitude for cures supposed to have been effected by the intercession of saints or deliverance vouchsafed from the perils of the sea.

Mohammedans believe that lunatics are protected by Allah, and that to be kind to them brings good fortune, and to injure them the reverse. People kiss the hand of a madman and give him alms in the hope that their wishes will be fulfilled.

In Egypt and other parts of the East, insane but harmless persons wander about and are regarded as saints. You will see an idiot with nothing in the way of clothes on him followed by a crowd, who treat him with the greatest reverence. His mind is in heaven, and he is not responsible for what he does on earth. He is a "holy man," and often a dervish. David, then, had method in the madness which he feigned when driven to extremities in Gath (1 Samuel xxi. 13).

This accounts for the extraordinary and apparently insane things that were done for a sign by even genuine prophets like Ezekiel and Hosea (Ezekiel iv.; Hosea i. 2).

"Ahaziah fell down from the lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this sickness" (2 Kings i. 2). In China and Japan a relative or friend of a sick person will visit a temple and beat the drum, which notifies to the god that there is urgent need of help. To induce the god to hear, one or both of his ears are tickled. Then the visitor, after praying and lighting a joss-stick, shakes out from a receptacle one of several bamboo slips with numbers on them. In return for

cash the temple-keeper gives a paper having on it the number that corresponds. On this paper are verses stating darkly, and with a safe vagueness, the nature of the disease or the probable result or the remedy. Of course the cure cannot be effected unless the sun, moon, and stars are propitious. We know how, when the Shunammite was preparing to go to Elisha for help when her son died, her husband said, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor Sabbath" (2 Kings iv. 23).

Elisha sent Gehazi to lay his staff on the dead son of the Shunammite (2 Kings iv. 29). So, too, from the body of Paul were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and evil spirits went out of them" (Acts xix. 12). It is now common amongst the Arabs to bind on or wrap round a sick person some part of the dress of saints, in the belief that healing virtue will issue from it. We know that scapulars from Lourdes are accredited with similar power. St. Matthew says (xiv. 36) that the men of Gennesaret brought to Jesus all that were sick, and besought Him that they might touch the border of His garment.

Famous sheikhs are now supposed to be able to heal by breathing, by spitting, by touching. Two hundred years ago in England "the king's touch" was believed to be a sovereign remedy against scrofula.

Asa, King of Judah, was not what would now be called a Christian scientist, for 2 Chronicles xvi. 12

tells us that " in his disease he sought not to the Lord but to the physicians."

It is expressly said that our Lord " gave sight to many blind " (Luke iv. 18, vii. 21 ; John v. 3), and that " a great multitude of blind " lay at the Pool of Bethesda. The prevalence of blindness in the East is now, and always no doubt has been, caused to a large extent by dirt and flies. Slight ailments which might have been cured at first by a simple " wash " are neglected.

In Northern Europe only one in a thousand is blind, in Egypt there is one in every hundred. Everywhere throughout Palestine some Bartimæus, young or old, stretches out his hand for alms, and you will see a dozen or more blind men walking in Indian file, each with a staff in one hand and the other hand resting on the shoulder of the man before him—" the blind leading the blind."

It was the belief of the time and the country of our Lord that the saliva of one who was fasting benefited weak eyes, and that clay cured tumours on the eyelids. This illustrates St. John ix. 6. If the medicines which I saw given in China were like what the woman who had suffered many things from physicians took, it is no wonder that she did not become better, but rather worse.

In China and Egypt I have seen and heard of epileptics and lunatics who closely resembled the devil-possessed people described in Matthew xvii. 15 ; Mark ix. 18 ; Luke ix. 38–42, and in other places in the Bible. They were continually falling into fire

and water ; they foamed at the mouth, and ground their teeth ; they pined away ; they used to cry out and bruise themselves with the chains that are put upon lunatics in those unscientific countries. Instances like those mentioned in Mark v. 2–16 and in Luke viii. 26–36 are to be seen in China and in other Eastern countries. They sometimes live in caves and burial-places ; they seem to have superhuman strength, and frighten every one whom they meet ; they greatly dislike wearing clothes. In the East it is often said of a lunatic, "He hath a devil," and the poor man is chained up and beaten to drive out the devil.

In China blind slave damsels, who are accredited with the spirit of divination, bring to their masters no small gain by soothsaying. When one of these spirit mediums is consulted, she sits down and after a time falls into a trance. Suddenly there is a cry, "The spirit has come!" and the medium slowly delivers her message in an unnatural voice, as though it came from her stomach. Then gradually, with horrible contortions, the medium empties herself, as it were, of the influence. This illustrates what is related in Acts xvi. 16–19 about a maid having a spirit of divination, who met Paul and Silas at Philippi.

In the Book of Jubilees, which shows the popular ideas of Christ's day, there are angels of fire, wind, health, disease, and of all things in heaven and earth. We read that our Lord rebuked an unclean devil and also a fever as if it were a person (Luke iv. 35, 39).

The healing power of the Pool of Bethesda was ascribed to an angel who "troubled the water." In reference to this pool, it has been established that there are in the east of Jerusalem mineral springs; that they are intermittent; and that Orientals resort to such springs.

St. Paul says that "the thorn in the flesh" from which he suffered was "a messenger of Satan" to "buffet" him (2 Corinthians xii. 7).

Sir W. M. Ramsay suggests that the infirmity of the flesh which St. Paul was grateful to the Galatians for not despising (Galatians iv. 14) was a species of chronic malarial fever ("St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen," p. 94). If the apostle were first seen in a Galatian village shaking like an aspen-leaf and quite incapacitated, they might have despised him as a weakling. The terrible headache that paroxysms of malaria produces would have seemed to the sufferer like "a stake in the flesh." Modern travellers have described a malarial headache to be "like a red-hot bar thrust through the forehead."

Peter's wife's mother was attacked by the fever, which was caused by the marshy land in the neighbourhood of Capernaum. So notorious for this was the locality that the physicians would not allow Josephus, when hurt by his horse sinking in a marsh, to sleep even a single night in Capernaum.

Speaking of fevers, we may remark that one particular kind has always been prevalent in the island of Malta, or Melita, and that it is generally accom-

Photo by. *J. W. McLellan.*

CARRYING HIS BED.

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panied by dysentery. Here it was that "the father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery" and was healed by St. Paul (Acts xxviii. 8).

It was easy for the cured paralytic to take up that whereon he lay and walk (Luke v. 24) for beds in the East meant then as they do now—only a straw or, at best, a padded mat. A whole family will sleep together on a large mat: "My children are with me in bed" (Luke xi. 7).

The mental emotion of our Lord in His agony was so violent that it forced from His body sweat stained with blood. Instances are cited in medical works of similar occurrences. One is the case of a Norwegian sailor in a tremendous storm.

DRINKING

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

Photo by *J. W. McLellan.*

A WATER-SELLER WITH SKIN BOTTLE.

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CHAPTER XII

DRINKING

It is the custom to mix wine with resin in Greece and Cyprus. Here, and in other countries, it is mixed with ingredients that give it a special flavour, or make it stronger, or the reverse. This is the "spiced wine" of Canticles (viii. 2), the "strong drink" of which Isaiah speaks (v. 22), and the wine which Wisdom mingled (Proverbs ix. 2).

In Syria wine is sometimes mixed with honey and black pepper. This is the "wine of myrrh" spoken of in Mark xv. 23. In the East an intoxicated person is a rare sight. Once, however, I saw a man who had fallen out of a cart when in that condition. Soon a crowd gathered round him, and I heard people say that he had been drinking new wine. This was what was said of those who spoke in strange languages on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 13). New wine is very intoxicating. New wine must also be put, as our Lord said, into new bottles, that is skins. Wine and water is still kept in skins in the East, generally in the skins of goats.

One day in Cairo I noticed a water-seller

distributing glasses of water to every one who wanted it. Some charitable person had bought the skin of water that the man carried and told him to give to all who asked for it. This common incident of street life is what Isaiah takes to illustrate the freedom of God's salvation. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah lv. 1). This is the poor man's market, but too many of us do not avail ourselves of it. The day I saw the incident referred to was a cold one, and no person would take the brass cup of water, though it was offered for nothing.

> "At the devil's mart are all things sold,
> Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold,
> Bubbles we earn with our whole soul's tasking;
> 'Tis only God that is given away, 'tis only Heaven
> can be had for the asking."

"And He showed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take of the Water of Life freely."

When our Lord sent His apostles on their missionary journey He thought of the thirst they would suffer as they tramped in a hot climate from village to village and gave the promise, "Whoso-

ever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew x. 42).

In India people may be seen on the roads offering water to passers-by for the sake of the gods.

DWELLINGS

CHAPTER XIII

DWELLINGS

THE way houses are made now in Egypt and in Palestine explain many scriptural allusions. They are built of mud or of sun-dried mud bricks. Job speaks of a house of clay (iv. 19).

Ezekiel dug a hole through the mud wall of his house as a sign to the people, and carried out through it the bundle he was to take with him in his symbolic pilgrimage (Ezekiel xii. 5). The easiness of this excavation is well known to thieves, for they dig through and steal (Job xxiv. 16; Matthew vi. 19 [Greek]).

The slender pillars of the alcove of some of the chambers of the Alhambra explain how Samson pulled down the support of the house of Dagon (Judges xvi. 26–30).

"She [Rahab] let them [the two spies] down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall" (Joshua ii. 15). When I was in Jaffa I saw a child let down in the same way from a similar house. (See 2 Corinthians xi. 33.)

The windows of Eastern houses are open woodwork. It was through a lattice of this kind that

the mother of Sisera looked for his return (Judges v. 28), and it was through a lattice that the observer mentioned in Proverbs vii. 6 saw "a young man void of understanding" going to his ruin.

The roofs, which are only layers of mud upon a framework of branches of trees, reeds or thorns, leak badly unless they are constantly rolled to close up cracks and holes. "By slothfulness the roof sinketh in; and through idleness of the hands the house leaketh" (Ecclesiastes x. 18). Rain-soaked roofs are compared in Proverbs xxvii. 15 to contentious women. Grass grows upon the roofs, but it soon withers in the heat (Psalm cxxix. 6).

St. Mark (ii. 1–12) and St. Luke (v. 18–26) tell us that, on one occasion, our Lord, standing probably in the open court of a house, was surrounded by such a dense crowd that it was not possible to bring a man who needed healing into His presence in the ordinary way. Accordingly the friends of the man broke up and removed part of the roof of the house in the open court of which Jesus was, and lowered the afflicted one from above. The flat roofs of the houses in Capernaum were then, as now, very low, and the man's bed was only a padded quilt; so by stooping down and holding the corners of the quilt the men could easily let down the sick man. It was the device of peasants, accustomed to open their roofs, and lower to the ground grain, straw, and other things as they do now. A hole is easily made and easily repaired in the kind of roofs we have described.

Dwellings

Writing in "The New Pilgrim's Progress" of his notions before he visited Palestine Mark Twain says: "When I used to read that they let a bed-ridden man down through the roof of a house in Capernaum to get him into the presence of the Saviour, I generally had a three-story brick in my mind, and marvelled that they did not break his neck with the strange experiment. I perceive, now, however, that they might have taken him by the heels and thrown him clear over the house without discommoding him very much. Palestine is not changed any since those days, in manners, customs, architecture, or people."

In an Eastern town the flat roofs join each other in many cases, and thus afford an easy passage from one house to another, which is often used. This explains our Lord's command to His disciples, "Let him that is on the housetop not go down to take out the things that are in his house" (Matthew xxiv. 17; Mark xiii. 15; Luke xvii. 31).

As sentences from Chinese classics are framed and hung as pictures on the walls of houses in China, so passages from the Law are put up in the dwellings of Oriental Jews. These Jews also nail to their door-posts small tin or lead or glass cases containing pieces of vellum with the words of Deuteronomy vi. 4–9, and xi. 13–21 written on them.

A lamp is kept lighted in every Eastern house all night. Not to have one betokens great poverty, and it is said of the owner of the house that "he sleeps in darkness." "The light of the wicked," says Bildah, meaning the light of life, "shall be

put out" (Job xviii. 5). "The light of the righteous rejoices," says the Book of Proverbs, "but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out" (Proverbs xiii. 9). Our Lord says (Matthew v. 15), "Neither do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth into all that are in the house." It shineth unto all because a peasant's house has only one room, as a rule. During the day the house door is always open, so that all may see that nothing wrong is going on. If men love darkness rather than light, their deeds are supposed to be evil (John iii. 19).

In the houses of the poor there is often neither a window nor a chimney. In such a house the woman who had lost a piece of silver needed to light a lamp, even by day, to find it (Luke xv. 8). Dried dung is very often the fuel that is used, and when there is no opening for the escape of the smoke except the door it is pleasant neither for the nose nor for the eyes. When green wood is burned there is more smoke and more irritation. "As smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him" (Proverbs x. 26). Fortunately these fires do not continue after the cooking for which they were lighted is finished. In very cold weather, however, they are kept up all day. So Isaiah represents the Almighty saying in reference to His rebellious people, "These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day" (lxv. 5). In the houses of the rich braziers of charcoal are used. The charcoal is burnt to a white heat before the braziers are brought into the rooms,

so there are no fumes and no smoke. It was around such a brazier of charcoal that St. Peter sat with the servants and the officers in the court of the high priest when he denied his Master (John xviii. 18). It was on a fire of charcoal that the risen Christ cooked bread and fish for His disciples (John xxi. 9).

Eglon, King of Moab, was sitting "in his summer parlour" (Judges iii. 20) when he was killed by Ehud. For "summer parlour" the margin of the Revised Version suggests "upper chamber of coolness." Such a chamber placed on the flat roof of the house is not uncommon in the East. The little upper chamber which the Shunammite made for Elisha (2 Kings iv. 10) was "with walls" in contrast to the mere awnings of branches, with open sides which were, and are now, set up in summer on the roofs of houses.

"Now the king sat in the winter house in the ninth month" (Jeremiah xxxvi. 22). "And I will smite the winter house with the summer house" (Amos iii. 15). In Oriental houses the lower apartments are most used in cold weather and the upper constitute the summer house. If the winter and summer house are on the same storey, the external and airy apartment is the summer house, and that for winter is the interior and more sheltered room. The Emperor of China has a summer palace and a winter one, and in both there are as many stone and marble lions as there were in Solomon's house of the forest of Lebanon (1 Kings x. 19, 20).

St. Paul says, "If any man buildeth on the foundation [of Jesus Christ] gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble" (1 Corinthians iii. 12). In Pekin I have seen houses that were built of all kinds of materials. It is a city of princes and paupers, and in the houses of the former there is much gilding and silver work, but the poor live in hovels made of mud, reeds, straw, wood and such-like things.

"And Samuel took Saul and his servant, and brought them into the guest-chamber, and made them sit in the chiefest place among them that were bidden" (1 Samuel ix. 22). In the house of every even tolerably prosperous Chinaman there is a guest-chamber, and "the chiefest place" in it is the seat not on the right but on the left hand of the host.

To a householder in Jerusalem our Lord sent two of His disciples with the injunction, "Say to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is My guest-chamber where I shall eat the Passover with My disciples?" (Mark xiv. 14).

"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open" (Isaiah xxii. 22). I have seen the key of a gate of the Coptic town in old Cairo so large that it might well be laid on a man's shoulder. Enormous wooden locks are placed inside the doors of gardens and outer courts, and even on those of inner rooms in some places. A key is the symbol of authority in an Eastern house. So in Revelation iii. 7 Christ is described as "He that hath the key of David."

In an Eastern khan or caravanserai, asses, camels, and other beasts are lodged in an open court, the lower chambers serving as store-rooms for the loads taken off their backs ; the upper rooms are given to human guests, but they contain no furniture and each traveller brings his own bed. It was to such an "inn" that the good Samaritan brought the man who had fallen among robbers.

The command "Take up thy bed and walk" (John v. 8) can be easily obeyed in the East, for even a town-made, luxurious bed is only a quilt stuffed with cotton-wool.

A bed is often laid in a recess of a room, which recess is raised, some two feet high by three feet broad, called in Arabic a "mastabeh." This accounts for the words "come down" in 2 Kings i. 4 : "Thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art gone up."

Isaiah speaks of tents and of tent life (xxxviii. 12) and of God as a Being "that stretcheth out the heavens like [the] fine cloth [of a Sultan's pavilion] and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in" (xl. 22).

The tents of Bedouins ("houses of hair") which we see now in the East are made of goat's hair, and one tent is generally set apart for the entertainment of guests.

In the time of Nehemiah, in order to commemorate "the feast of the seventh month," the people made booths upon the roofs of their houses (Nehemiah viii. 16). To this day, whenever a Jew is found,

even in the crowded courts of London, he, if it be possible, raises a tent during the week of the Feast of Tabernacles, in remembrance of the early history of his race. The tent reminds him that "We have not here an abiding city" (Hebrews xiii. 14).

David lived in the Cave of Adullam (1 Samuel xxii. 1), and I have seen people living in caves near Granada. Job speaks of those who dwell "in holes of the earth and of the rocks" (xxx. 6).

The Gadarene demoniacs lived in the caves or rock-hewn tombs in which the dead are still buried in those parts.

EATING

CHAPTER XIV

EATING

ABRAHAM'S entertainment of angels "unawares" under the oaks of Mamre presents a perfect picture of the manner in which a modern Bedouin sheikh receives travellers arriving at his encampment.

The patriarch showed to the three heavenly visitors hospitality and politeness similar to that which a Chinese gentleman shows to-day. A Chinese asks you to favour him by taking rice in his humble abode. When you go you find a dinner of many courses in a fine house. Abraham said that he would "fetch a morsel of bread," but he ordered a dinner of cakes, milk, veal, and butter (Genesis xviii. 6–9).

If special guests arrive an Arab sheikh will even now kill a calf, as Abraham did (Genesis xviii. 7), in their honour; himself, like the patriarch, running to the herd to fetch it. To give a calf for a feast instead of the more ordinary kid was a special honour. The Arab idea of a feast is "a heap that cannot be leaped by a cat." And just as Abraham "stood by" his guests under the tree and waited

on them, so a sheikh entertainer of the present day stands beside his guests. He is their servant, and it is meat enough for him to see them enjoying his hospitality.

Women do not eat with men in the East, and this is why Sarah did not appear, but stayed at the door of the harem tent, which is always behind the other tents. Here she overheard the messengers saying that she would have a son, and laughed. The cooking of Abraham and Sarah for their guests was as rapid as was that of the witch of Endor when she served up her fatted calf and unleavened bread to Saul (1 Samuel xxviii. 24, 25). It is so now. Arabs cook meat immediately after it is killed, and bake fresh bread for every meal. Whether it be a fowl or a kid or a calf that is for dinner in the East, killing and eating, as in the time of St. Peter, follow each other immediately (Acts x. 13).

The father of the prodigal son in the parable could not better show the yearning love he felt towards his returned child than by ordering, not the usual chicken or kid, but a fatted calf to be killed to greet his return (Luke xv. 23). It is called "*the* fatted calf," and it was and is the custom for a farmer to keep a fat calf ready for the visit of a guest.

Arabs only eat flesh on feast days. "Ye have nourished your hearts," says St. James (v. 5), "in a day of slaughter," in a day, that is, when flesh meat is to be had, and you enjoy "a feast of fat things." Flesh-eating and joviality are asso-

ciated together. "Thou never gavest me a kid," complained the elder brother, "that I might make merry with my friends." There is a Moslem Feast of Atonement that resembles the Passover of the Jews and their Feast of Atonement. It commemorates Abraham's contemplated sacrifice of his son, not of Isaac, but of Ishmael, according to Moslem teaching. A lamb is slain by each householder, the blood of the sacrifice is sprinkled on the door-post, and an olive-branch is fixed over the door as a sign of peace.

"The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honour . . . a feast and a good day" (Esther viii. 16, 17). "Light" here probably refers to richly coloured lamps, like those in which the Chinese rejoice and which are so much used in Eastern decorations. They are particularly attractive because of the small amount of light that there is after sunset in the towns and villages.

Lentils are a species of vetch ; the red variety is the best. People still eat the same sort of red, or rather brown, pottage for which Esau sold his birthright (Genesis xxv. 34). When the lentil pottage was being cooked its odour must have been very tempting to the hungry and tired huntsman, for it was mixed with olive oil and pepper and carefully prepared. When the guardianship of the temple at Mecca and of the town fell into the hands of Abu Gabshan the weak drunkard sold it to Cosa, one of Mohammed's ancestors, for a bottle of wine.

I have been in places in the East where there

were no hotels, and it seemed quite natural to call at a European house and ask for a bed. Abraham's servant invited himself, asking Rebekah, "Is there room in thy father's house for us?" (Genesis xxiv. 23). The camels were brought into the house and straw (there is no hay in the East) was given to them. The owner and his family often sleep in the same house with camels and other beasts at the present time in Palestine.

Laban's address, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord," is still the polite thing to say. Sometimes the salutation is "Peace be unto you!" The hospitality of Arabs is notorious. They say that every house in every village of theirs is a guest-house. "The guest comes in the place of God, and we willingly give what he needs." The guest is entitled by custom to three days' hospitality, during which time he is supposed to be able to transact the business that has brought him to the place. "And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there" (Judges xix. 4, 5).

Laban rebuked Jacob because he had stolen away with his wives and had not told him he was leaving, so that he might have sent him away "with mirth and with songs, with tabret and with harp" (Genesis xxxi. 27). Many a night in Cairo I have been disturbed by the noisy send-off of persons going on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

"And Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they did

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AN ARAB REPAST, EATEN WITH FINGERS.

eat bread, and tarried all night in the mountain" (Genesis xxxi. 54). Bread represents all food, and a night-long dinner is often given by rich Chinese now. There are sometimes over fifty courses. Jacob and Laban had had a quarrel, and when they made it up this feast was given to celebrate their revived friendship. The same thing is done to-day. Mr. Shumacher, as he tells in his "Across Jordan," when prospecting for the railway to Damascus, had many quarrels with the Arabs. When a quarrel ended, the head-men made what they called a reconciliation feast. A traveller being visited in his tent by truculent and apparently dangerous Arabs put salt into food, and induced them to eat it. When the visitors found that they had taken the man's salt, their whole manner changed towards him. They felt bound not only not to injure him, but to protect him. So we find it stated in 2 Chronicles xiii. 5 that God gave the kingdom over Israel to David "by a covenant of salt"; and in Ezra iv. 14 that those who "eat the salt of the palace" would not see the king's dishonour.

Joseph's sending food from his table to his brethren and special delicacies for Benjamin (Genesis xliii. 34) is just what is done now at a Chinese Mandarin's dinner. Feasting, too, on great occasions is sometimes enjoyed by uninvited guests. On a day of national rejoicing Nehemiah ordered the people to "eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared" (viii. 10). In the same way, what remains of a

Lord Mayor's banquet in London is given to the poor. (See Esther i. 5.)

Palestine was called a land "flowing with milk and honey," and these commodities are plentiful still. Of the wild honey which John the Baptist ate, a traveller remarks that as a change it is an agreeable sweetmeat, but that after a few days constantly partaking of it the European palate rejects it as nauseous and almost disgusting.

The Israelites were forbidden to eat "of anything that dieth of itself," but they might "sell it unto a foreigner" (Deuteronomy xiv. 21). The Chinese do not, as a rule, eat beef, but if an animal fall down and kill itself they call it "precipice beef," and sell it to foreigners.

We need not think that the food provided for Solomon was the measure of his individual appetite. It was also "for all that came unto King Solomon's table." "The provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and three score measures of meal; ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and gazelles, and roebucks, and fatted fowl" (1 Kings iv. 22–24). At one time in the palaces at Pekin thirty pounds of meat were daily placed before the Emperor of China and twenty-one before his chief wife.

One must see the flat, pancake-like loaves that Eastern people eat in order to understand the Biblical expression "breaking bread," which is used for taking a meal.

We read in Matthew xiv. 19 that our Lord "brake

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BREADMAKERS.

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and gave the loaves to the disciples," and in Acts ii. 46 that the first Christians broke bread from house to house. The bread is generally unleavened, but sometimes sour dough is put into it. This is "the leaven that leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Corinthians v. 6). When our Lord said to His disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (Matthew xvi. 6), those simple peasants thought that He referred to the leavened loaves to be found only in the houses of the rich, and that He was warning them against luxury.

In Palestine people eat with their fingers out of a common dish; hence the even greater necessity for washing hands before and after a meal. Knives and forks are less needful than with us, because there are no joints, and the meat before being stewed is cut into small pieces. The thin bread just described serves, when torn small, as an impromptu three-cornered spoon. With this or with his fingers a host, when he desires to show attention, takes up a piece of the meat or rice, or whatever is in the common dish, and hands it to a guest or puts it into the guest's mouth. "Jesus answereth, He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it to him" (John xiii. 26).

"Except they wash themselves, they eat not" (Mark vii. 4) is true of most Eastern people. A servant pours water on the hands of a guest, and sometimes on his feet, before the guest takes his place at the trencher. Our Lord compared unfavourably

the discourteous conduct of his host, Simon the Pharisee, with the action of the woman "which was a sinner." "I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet: but she hath wetted My feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair" (Luke vii. 44).

After a native dinner in China and Japan, servants bring scented water and pour it on the hands of guests. So it was done in the Holy Land. Elisha, the son of Shaphat, poured water on the hands of Elijah (2 Kings iii. 11). Rising from supper, our Lord began to wash the disciples' feet (John xiii. 4, 5).

It is said in Proverbs xxvii. 22 that "though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle among bruised corn, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." An Arab dish is made by first braying wheat in a stone mortar, and you often hear the sound of the operation as you pass the houses of these people.

In Isaiah xxx. 14 we read: "And he shall break it as a potter's vessel is broken, breaking it in pieces without sparing; so that there shall not be found among the pieces thereof a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the cistern." In any village in Palestine now you will see in the evening children of the poor going with "sherds," or broken pieces of pottery, into the shop of a baker. Into these "sherds" the baker pours a few hot embers for warming the evening meal. It is common, too, to find at a well or

" pit " pieces of broken jars, to be used as ladles either to drink from or fill vessels from.

I have seen in Cyprus and in Spain, at Cadiz, great heaps of salt looking like small snow-covered hills. The bottom parts of these stores are sometimes damaged, and then the salt is " good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men " (Matthew v. 13).

St. Matthew tells us that as Jesus " sat at meat in the house, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples " (ix. 10). An Oriental house is by no means the castle of its owner. Rather, in many respects, it is regarded as common property, and any one may at any time have access to its rooms. Only each person as he enters a house takes off his sandals and leaves them at the door, so as not to soil the white mats. At the time of our Lord the Jews reclined at meals on couches or cushions placed round low tables of gaily painted wood. The couches formed three sides of a square, and the servants attended at the open side. The feet of the guests were turned towards any persons who were outside the circle of bidden guests. Hence the woman who was a sinner could, though not a guest, come near to the feet of Jesus as He reclined at dinner in the house of Simon (Luke vii. 37, 38). From Leonardo da Vinci and other painters many have gained a wrong impression of our Lord and His disciples sitting at meat.

There are a great many people in Eastern countries who eat little because they have little to eat. " I

have given you cleanness of teeth . . . want of bread" (Amos iv. 6). It is still customary for beggars in Palestine to scrape their teeth with their thumb-nails, and then display the clean nail to those from whom they ask alms, as an evidence that no food had been masticated that day.

A rich man in the East will sometimes gather the poor ostentatiously out of the streets, and give them a meal for a self-righteous show of charity.

In China two invitations are sent for a feast, one some time previous, which is rather vague, another urgent, and detailed as to place and hour: "Come, for all things are ready" (Luke xiv. 17).

To eat with publicans and sinners seemed as horrible to the Rabbis as it would to a Brahmin to eat with Sudras. The Lord Jesus Christ, on the other hand, instructed the seventy to share the household life of the hated Samaritans, and even to eat with them.

In China food is placed for a little time at the tombs of ancestors, and it is thought that these take out of the food its spiritual essence. The depositors then eat the material food themselves. The question arises, Can Chinese converted to Christianity do this without being guilty of idolatry? The problem resembles the meat-offered-to-idols problem, which St. Paul solves in the eighth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians.

EGYPT

CHAPTER XV

EGYPT

"AND Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born, ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive" (Exodus i. 22). The opposite of this is done by the people who live in boats at Canton. They fasten logs of wood to their little boys so that if the boys fall into the river they can be easily pulled out. No precaution is taken in the case of girls, for they are not wanted. There is a place shown on an island in the Nile where tradition says Moses was rescued.

What are called the plagues of Egypt, whether they were or were not miraculous, have counterparts in the natural phenomena of the land. For different reasons the Nile sometimes becomes the colour of blood. The khamsin, or south-east wind, fills the atmosphere with dust and causes darkness. Those of us who have lived in Egypt know what a plague frogs are with their croaking, and how they came into our humble house in default of a king's bed-chamber. Sanitary science traces half our diseases to flies (no fly, no die), so swarms of them must

have been a terrible punishment. Boils are still a plague in Egypt. Very little rain falls there, but I have seen a thunder-storm accompanied by terrible hail.

The description which I was given at Cyprus of the number and destructiveness of invading locusts was not unlike Exodus x. 15: "They covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land." Joel i. 7 says of the locust: "He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree: he hath made it clean bare, and cast it away." A shower of locusts falls as closely as ever snow fell, and is as thick and brown as a London fog. They eat up grass and leaves, and turn, in a few moments, a green country into a grey one. "The garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness."

No one was allowed to "come in unto Pharaoh" unless he were in all respects ceremonially clean. This entailed the shaving of the whole body, careful bathing, and perfectly clean clothes.

Interpreting dreams belonged to the priestly office, and all priests were required to be absolutely hairless, as is the case now with Buddhist priests. Joseph had to exchange his prison clothes for rich garments provided for him.

The bull, as a symbol of strength, was a favourite object of worship in Egypt (Exodus xxxii. 8). We see now at Sacarah stone memorials of huge sacred bulls, and in the Cairo Museum the cow Hathor, which was worshipped.

The fat and lean "kine" which Pharaoh saw in his dream were, no doubt, what are now called water-buffaloes.

The magicians or sacred scribes could not interpret the dream of Pharaoh. These "wise men" knew as little as do their successors, the fortune-tellers who fool tourists in modern Egypt. And yet the dreams of Pharaoh were thoroughly Egyptian. "In my dream," said the king, "behold, I stood upon the bank of the river: and, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine," and so on. No land has such cause to be grateful to its river as Egypt has to its Nile. The country is literally "the gift of the Nile." Out of it do actually come good or bad years, fat or lean kine. A similar picture to that of the lean water-buffaloes eating up the fat ones occurred to a comparatively recent writer. Describing an Egyptian famine he says: "The year presented itself as a monster whose wrath must annihilate all the resources of life and all the means of subsistence."

The wheat of Pharaoh's second dream, with seven ears on the one stalk, is the many-eared variety, or mummy wheat, still grown in the Delta, and the east wind which blasted the second stalk and its ears, is the khamsin, or burning south-east wind.

"And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou" (Genesis xli. 39, 40). This means that Pharaoh made Joseph Khedive, or minor

sovereign. Joseph became to Pharaoh what the Khedive, or ruler of Egypt, is to the Sultan of Turkey.

Pharaoh gave to Joseph for a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-phera, a priest of On (Genesis xli. 45). One is now called Heliopolis and is situated near Cairo. One pillar is seen there which belonged to the great temple of the sun-god Ra. Poti-phera was a priest of this temple, and its priests took precedence of all Egyptian priests.

Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt (xlii. 1). The famed valley of the Nile is regaining its old-time prestige as a land of plenty, thanks to British occupation.

The sacks and saddles on donkeys that we see now depicted on the monuments in Egypt are just like those that were used in the days when the sons of Jacob went to Egypt to get corn.

In his "Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie" (1752–55), Norden says he had sent to the local dignitary of a province with the usual presents, to ask to be allowed to visit it. This answer, very like that of Joseph to his brethren was returned: "I have consulted my cup, and find you are those of whom our prophets have spoken—Frenchmen in disguise, who would come, and by small gifts and pleasant insinuating manners, go about everywhere, examine the state of the country; leave in the end to report at home, and finally return with a multitude of other Frenchmen, to conquer the land and kill us all."

Joseph ate at a table apart from his brethren

because his priestly caste would not allow him to eat with the laity. Another table was placed for his Egyptian guests, because, though not of priestly rank, they could not sit with unclean foreigners. Egypt of old, like China, regarded the people of all other countries as impure barbarians.

That Joseph should swear by the life of Pharaoh is quite Oriental. The Egyptian king was worshipped as a god, and an oath by his life, like that of the Persians "by the king's head," would be reckoned more binding than any other.

Joseph made what is called a "corner" in grain. He bought up all the corn he could in the years of plenty so that he might sell it in the years of scarcity. Rich men in China now make a corner of rice, but they do so not from what was perhaps Joseph's paternal government motive, but simply to enrich themselves. They deserve what was predicted of such "trusts" in Proverbs xi. 26: "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it."

A memorial of the famine with which Joseph had to deal is found in a sepulchral inscription in Arabia. A flood of rain laid bare a tomb in which lay a woman having on her person a profusion of jewels. At her head was a coffer filled with treasure, and a tablet with this inscription: "In Thy name, O God, the God of Himyar, I, Tayar, the daughter of Dzu Shefar, sent my steward to Joseph, and he delaying to return to me, I sent my handmaid with a measure of silver to bring me back a measure of

flour ; and not being able to procure it, I sent her with a measure of gold ; and not being able to procure it, I sent her with a measure of pearls ; and not being able to procure it, I commanded them to be ground ; and finding no profit in them, I am shut up here." If this inscription is genuine, it shows that the famine was grievous in other lands as well as in Egypt.

Joseph gave to his brethren gifts of costly clothing to wear on grand occasions. Literally it is clothes to change and not changes of clothing.

The present of honey, of spice, of myrrh, and of other things which Jacob sent to Joseph before he knew who he was, and the flattery of Judah telling Joseph that he was "even as Pharaoh"—all this is typical of the East.

Goshen, which Pharaoh assigned to Jacob and his sons to dwell in is still "the best of the land" (Genesis xlvii. 6).

Long life is considered of great value in the East. The older a person is the more respect he gets, and when a Chinese wishes to be polite he pretends to think that you are older than you are. When asked how old he was by Pharaoh, Jacob grumbled that the days of the years of his pilgrimage were only one hundred and thirty years. "Few and evil have been the days of the years of my life" (Genesis xlvii. 8, 9). It is interesting to compare with this experience a similar one recorded so very long afterwards by the poet Goethe : "I have ever been esteemed one of Fortune's chiefest favourites ; nor

will I complain or find fault with the course my life has taken. Yet, truly, there has been nothing but toil and care: and I may say that, in all my seventy-five years, I have never had a month of genuine comfort. It has been the perpetual rolling of a stone, which I have always had to raise anew."

The mummies of the three Pharaohs of the Bible may be seen in the Museum at Cairo. There is the one with whom Joseph had to do, the one who "knew not Joseph," whose daughter rescued Moses, and the Pharaoh of the oppression. Pharaoh was not a name but a title, and one that was given to every king of Egypt. It meant "the great house" or gate, and so was identical with the Sublime Porte of more recent times.

It was with that small but clever-looking head which I have often studied in the Museum that the "Sublime Porte" dreamed of the seven fat water-buffaloes and the seven thin ones, of the seven good ears of corn and the seven blasted ones. It was from one of those mummied fingers that he took his signet ring and put it on the finger of Joseph.

The Bible only says that Pharaoh's army was drowned in the Red Sea. Wily Eastern monarch that Pharaoh was, he remained on *terra firma* to see what would happen. Certainly those who live in Cairo know that his body was not lost, for every time they go into the Museum they see it there as large as life, if we may speak in this way of a mummy.

It was only as recently as the 8th of July, 1907, that the mummy of the Pharaoh who oppressed the

Hebrews was unwrapped, and has been identified by markings of the swathing bands with Menephtah, son of Rameses II.

Slowly and carefully the linen bandages were unwound, and there was no little curiosity to see the man with whom Moses had his great controversy. What would he be like? When the head and face came to view they seemed to well accord with the character of the man that the Book of Exodus has depicted. His nose is hooked and his jaw long, and it was with that thin-cut mouth that he said, "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, loose the people from their burdens?" (Exodus v. 4).

FIRE AND FUEL

CHAPTER XVI

FIRE AND FUEL

A FIRE of thorns is a common sight in Palestine. It is generally lighted to clear land of wild growth, but any excuse for it will do, as the peasants take childish delight in the crackling noise and bright flames of burning thorn-bushes. And when the country was more preyed upon by robbers and wild beasts than it is now, watch-fires were necessary for protection. A traveller speaks of passing at night the encampment of a tribe of Bedouins and seeing large fires encircling it. In allusion to these safe-guards, Zechariah represents Jehovah as saying of Jerusalem, "I will be unto her a wall of fire round about" (ii. 5), and Isaiah as speaking in this way to unbelievers: "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that gird yourselves about with firebrands: walk ye in the flame of your fire, and among the brands that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow" (l. 11).

In 1 Kings xix. 6 mention is made of "a cake baken on coals." In the margin "hot stones"

is the explanation given of "coals." At the present day in the East cakes are baked on hot stones.

Allusions to the use of thorns as fuel are frequent in Scripture. "Before your pots can feel the thorns, He shall take them away with a whirlwind" (Psalm cxviii. 12). "As the cracking of thorns under a pot so is the laughter of a fool" (Ecclesiastes vii. 6).

Isaiah says (xxxiii. 12), "And the peoples shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut down, that are burned in the fire." Thorns and all kinds of rubbish are burned in Eastern lime-kilns.

In Psalm cxx. 4 "coals of juniper" should probably be "coals of broom." The best charcoal now in Palestine is made from the root, trunk, and branches of broom. Broom is the largest plant of the desert.

In Palestine as in Egypt, the only fuel in many parts for cooking or heating, if there be no thorns, is dried cow- or camel-dung made into cakes. Children, especially girls, may be seen gathering the materials for it, or kneading them into disks, which are then stuck against a wall or laid on the earth to dry (Ezekiel iv. 15). Voltaire ridiculed this passage in Ezekiel, but he showed ignorance of the East by so doing.

In China children, old people, and those who can do no other kind of work, are continually employed in cutting or gathering dry grass, leaves, and twigs to be used for fuel. This is the "grass which to-day

Photo by] [*American Colony, Jerusalem.*

FUEL.

("Grass which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven.")

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is and to-morrow is cast into the oven" (Matthew vi. 30). The oven is not in a dwelling-house, but in a separate small building; it is the joint property of several families. "Ten women shall bake their bread in one oven" (Leviticus xxvi. 26).

HOLY PLACES

CHAPTER XVII

HOLY PLACES

"AND all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established a prophet of the Lord" (1 Samuel iii. 20). Dan was the northern and Beer-sheba the southern limit of Palestine.

The country between these limits always appeared to the imagination of my childhood to be a large one, and I was surprised when I saw with my eyes how small the Holy Land really is. From Dan to Beer-sheba is only about a hundred and eighty miles.

The breadth of Palestine from Jordan to the sea is rarely more than fifty miles.

The "far country" to which the prodigal in the parable is represented as going was probably not thought of as more than eighty or ninety miles from Jerusalem.

We fancy that places like Jerusalem or Athens where much history has been made should be large, but greatness and vastness are not the same. When we read in Joshua xii. 24 that thirty-one kings were smitten, we should realise that the kingdom of each sovereign was seldom larger than an English parish.

The "kings" whom Joshua smote were sheikhs, or petty chiefs. Crowns were not on their heads or sceptres in their hands; they were fortunate if they had decent clothes. They were merely the headmen of villages.

Nor could the thirty-two kings which Ben-hadad, King of Syria, had with him have been much more exalted (1 Kings xx. 1).

The Mohammedan world to this day reveres the black stone of the Caaba, at Mecca, as a relic of Abraham and Ishmael. The Scotch coronation stone, now in Westminster Abbey, was held to be Jacob's pillar.

The Muslims call Hebron El Khalil, or "the Friend," in allusion to Abraham, "the friend of God."

When the Psalmist wrote of "a dry and weary land, where no water is" (Psalm lxiii. 1), he was probably thinking of "the wilderness," or Migdar. This is a barren rocky region extending between the Dead Sea and the mountains of Hebron. It was the scene of the preaching of John the Baptist, at least at the beginning (Matthew iii. 1); for when the administration of baptism became common, it was necessary for him to remove to a better-watered region (John iii. 23).

Mosquitoes swarm at Tiberias, so that the reproach of Christ, that the Pharisees strained out a gnat, while they swallowed a camel, must have been clearly understood by his hearers at that place (Matthew xxiii. 24).

Hospitality is such a recognised duty in the East that it may have been not to an inn that Joseph and Mary went, but to a private house. Whichever it was the guest-chamber had already been given to earlier comers, and the only place available was the part of the room which is reserved for cattle in the single apartment of which the house of a poor man consists. This stable portion is on a level lower than that of the part where the family live.

The " Cave of the Nativity " now shown in Bethlehem is below a church, which has been built over it to do it honour. The site of the manger is on the east side of the grotto. From the roof hangs a row of silver lamps. On the marble pavement is a silver star and around it this inscription : " Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est."

Not far away in a western direction from Jerusalem is a precipitous mountain called Quarantana, from a tradition that our Saviour here fasted forty days and nights. It is said to have been from this " high mountain " that the devil showed to him " all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." In this " wilderness," somewhere amongst these bare hills, the Temptation took place, and we noticed many stones the shape of the loaves of bread made by the natives. The appearance of similar stones may have suggested the words, " If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread " (Luke iv. 3).

Going to these and other holy places we met great

crowds of pilgrims, and there was no little confusion among them. We heard parents calling for their children, and were reminded of the parents of the boy Jesus seeking for Him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance (Luke ii. 41–50).

Shortly after returning from his second visit to the Holy Land Stanley, afterwards Dean of Westminister, told some of his experiences to a London lighterman whom he had accidentally met. The man made the remark that it must have been beautiful to have been able to walk where the Saviour had walked. "Yes," replied Stanley, "it is beautiful to walk in the steps of the Saviour." We can all do this more or less spiritually, but there are only two places in Palestine where we may feel a moral certainty that the feet of Christ have trod—the well at Shechem, and the road over the Mount of Olives to Bethany.

Even of the Garden of Gethsemane, about which every Christian visitor is most anxious, the site is doubtful. The place now bearing the name is a walled enclosure 160 by 150 feet in dimensions, containing eight venerable olive-trees. The Greeks have originated a Garden of Gethsemane of their own, farther up the Mount of Olives. A Franciscan monk showed a cave called the Chapel of the Agony, a rock where the disciples slept, and a column where Judas gave the kiss of betrayal. For a franc may be bought a bouquet of flowers grown in the garden! Adjoining the tomb of David is the supposed Cœnaculum, or "upper room" where the Saviour

Photo by] [*F. W. McLellan.*

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

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kept the last Passover, and where He appeared to His disciples after the Resurrection.

Near the Armenian convent on Mount Zion is the so-called Palace of Caiaphas. Here you are shown the prison of Christ, the stone that was rolled away from the Sepulchre, and a smaller pillar on which the cock stood when he crew to warn Peter! The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is an enormous building, and contains seventy sacred localities presided over by seventeen different sects.

The Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre is so small that there is only room for three or four persons to enter it at once. Forty-three silver lamps belonging to the Greeks, Latins, Armenians, and Copts are suspended from the ceiling. The traditional *Via Dolorosa* is a narrow, ill-paved, dirty street, winding in and out by ruined walls and rickety buildings.

MARRIAGE

CHAPTER XVIII

MARRIAGE

"AND it came to pass, when he [Abram] was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon : and it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife : and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister : that it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my soul may live because of thee" (Genesis xii. 11–14). Possibly Abram may have heard a story which has recently been deciphered from an old papyrus. It tells how one of the Pharaohs, acting on the advice of his courtiers, sent armed men to fetch to his harem a beautiful woman and make away with her husband.

"Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar the Egyptian, her handmaid, and gave her to Abram her husband to be his wife" (Genesis xvi. 3). The same thing is done in China now, and the second wife's child is in all respects considered to be the child of the number one, legal wife. Mohammed gave permission to "marry what seems good to you of women, by twos,

or threes, or fours, of what your right hand possesses."

The fact that in most Eastern countries a man is allowed by law and public opinion to have as many wives as he can afford, and the number of wives that are in many royal harems at the present day—these things enable us to believe that Solomon "had seven hundred [real or nominal] wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines," as is stated in 1 Kings xi. 3. The King of Siam, who died lately, had two official wives and eighty others. This number, however, was few compared to what his father allowed himself. That modern Solomon had seven hundred wives and two thousand five hundred ladies-in-waiting.

Polygamy is a practical difficulty of Christian missionaries in the East. When General Gordon was going out to the Soudan he called upon Temple, Bishop of London, and asked him whether it would be right in converting the natives to tell them that they would be allowed, though Christians, to have three wives apiece. The Bishop said that he did not think that could be allowed. Whereupon General Gordon exclaimed, "What a pity! I might convert all Africa if you would allow that."

Difficulties arise, too, in heathen lands when converted natives marry those who have not become Christians. St. Paul discusses these in the seventh chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians.

Young people in the East now have little to do with their marriages. These are arranged for them

by parents or professional match-makers. The young are literally "given in marriage" (Matthew xxii. 30; 1 Corinthians vii. 38). The same custom prevailed in the time of Hagar, for we read in Genesis xxi. 21 that she took a wife for Ishmael her son out of the land of Egypt.

When a son has attained the age of twenty years, his father, if able, should marry him, and then take his hand and say, "I have disciplined thee, and taught thee, and married thee; I now seek refuge with God from thy mischief in the present world and the next." This Mohammedan tradition has been handed down from before the time when Abraham commissioned "his servant, the elder of his house" (Genesis xxiv. 2) to take a wife for his son Isaac. Abraham told the servant to go to his (Abraham's) kindred and take the young lady from there. This injunction accords with modern Eastern high-class usage. If not of a too near degree, a relative always has the preference in matrimonial negotiations. The same custom prevails amongst the Hindoos.

Laban said that it was better to give Rachel to Isaac than to another man, and to-day the Bedouin law is that a suitor has the exclusive right to the hand of his first cousin, so that even if he do not himself wish to marry her she cannot be married without his consent.

In China and in most countries in the East money or its equivalent is given for the bride. In China the equivalent of money is generally household furniture. All that is required for setting up house is

paid for by the girl's father, and the articles are carried by coolies in the wedding procession, so that people may see how well-to-do and liberal the family is. In the same way Rebekah was practically bought. "And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave them to Rebekah: he gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things" (Genesis xxiv. 53). These were espousal gifts.

Betrothal gifts are essential in the East, and are given with much ceremony in the presence of witnesses. The parents often take the advice of the son and heir in the management of the betrothal.

The parting blessing which was given to Rebekah by her family would be more appreciated in an Eastern than in a Western country. "Be thou the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them" (Genesis xxiv. 60). There was no thought of race suicide here.

Rebekah did what an Arab *fiancée* would do now. She "lighted off the camel" and veiled herself when Isaac appeared (Genesis xxiv. 65). She would not ride while he was on foot, and she would not allow her face to be seen till she was his wife. Similar respect was shown by Abigail when she "lighted off her ass, and fell before David on her face" (1 Samuel xxv. 23). Riders in China always dismount when they meet those whom they desire to honour.

In Palestine service is still, at times, accepted

for a wife, in lieu of money, and a modern traveller records an almost exact repetition of Laban's bargain with Jacob (Genesis xxix. 18). This is the case of a man who served eight years as a shepherd for his master's daughter, for whom he would otherwise have had to pay from 700 to 800 piastres.

It is still the custom in some places of the East, as it was in the time of Laban (Genesis xxix. 26), not to give a younger sister in marriage until her elder sisters are provided for in that way.

The story of the marriage of Samson is true to modern local colouring, only he should have acted on the Eastern principle that love comes after marriage, not before. The lover, however, could not himself manage the courtship. He had to ask his father and mother to get his sweetheart for him ; that is to say, to arrange what was to be given for her (Judges xiv. 3). Marriage feasts still continue for seven days amidst dancing, singing, and putting and answering riddles. The incident of the swarm of bees in a dried-up carcass is also true to local experience. I have often seen in Egypt dead camels and donkeys dried up by the heat and having no bad smell.

Samson's marriage was a failure, and no doubt the wiseacres said, " I told you how it would be when a young man chose a wife himself instead of allowing his parents to choose and, worse still, when he selected one outside his clan and even his own nation."

The custom which enabled Ruth to get Boaz for a husband is observed in Palestine still. The Eastern

bridegroom, attended by his groomsmen, "the sons of the bride-chamber" (Matthew ix. 15; John iii. 29) goes now, as of old, on the wedding evening —for that is the time when weddings take place— to the house of the bride, who awaits him veiled from head to foot (Genesis xxxviii. 14, 15; Revelation xix. 8), and wearing an attire which Jeremiah (ii. 32) says she could not forget. Drums and flutes are played, and the wedding procession is joined every now and then by friends of the bride and of the bridegroom who have been waiting for it.

At a city wedding torches are used, but in a village, lamps. Some of the latter hold only a small quantity of oil. The foolish virgins in the parable had not provided oil for a time of waiting, and their lamps were going out (Matthew xxv. 1–14). Wedding arrangements, like everything else in the East, are generally unpunctual.

In China I used to think of the man who had not on a wedding garment when I saw wedding processions in the streets. Those who attend are lent red cloaks for the occasion, so they have no excuse for not being properly dressed.

Disobedience of a wife to a husband is not tolerated now in the East any more than when Queen Vashti would not do "the bidding of King Ahasuerus" (Esther i. 10–15). It is thought that "every man should bear rule in his own house" (verse 22). When the bridegroom enters the bride's house he finds her seated thickly veiled. He walks round her three times then lifts the veil and throws

Photo by *American Colony, Jerusalem.*

WEDDING PROCESSION.

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it over his shoulder to show that the government of the lady is upon his shoulder. Probably Isaiah was thinking of this custom when he wrote in reference to Emmanuel—"The government shall be upon his shoulder" (ix. 6). In China and Japan women are trained to what are called the three obediences—obedience to a father, to a husband, and to sons when they grow up.

Being an Eastern, and writing when he did, it is natural that St. Paul should have at least acquiesced in the subjection of wives (Ephesians v. 22–24; 1 Timothy ii. 11–14; Titus ii. 5).

And if wives were to obey their husbands and to learn from them, widows were to stay at home and not go about from house to house (1 Timothy v. 13). Probably the apostle did not mean this virtue to be pushed to the extreme of a Church Father who said that women should leave home only three times—to be baptized, married, and buried.

And widows were not to be "tattlers." The Chinese would approve of these injunctions. A Chinese servant of a friend of mine told his master that he was going to be married. My friend expressed a hope that the wife-to-be had not bound feet. "Oh yes, she has," replied the boy; "that much better; she no walkee, talkee." Bound, that is maimed, feet, would prevent her from "going about from house to house" and being a "tattler." The majority of Orientals hold the opinion that "it were better that woman did not exist at all, but for the want of her to bring forth children."

Our Lord said that adultery was the one and only legitimate reason for divorce, which was teaching much needed at the time (Matthew xix. 4–12; Mark x. 11, 12; Luke xvi. 18).

"If any one," said the Rabbis, "see a woman handsomer than his wife, he may dismiss his wife and marry that woman." Hillel taught that, if a wife cooked badly her husband might put her away.

In China there are seven reasons for any one of which a man may divorce his wife. They are childlessness, wanton conduct, neglect of husband's parents, thievishness, jealousy, malignant disease, and loquacity. Here and in other parts of the East a daughter-in-law can easily be set at variance against her mother-in-law (see Matthew x. 35), because she has generally to live in the same house with her.

MODES OF EXPRESSION

CHAPTER XIX

MODES OF EXPRESSION

In the East now time is reckoned in the same way as in the Bible. It is still "the third hour," or "the sixth," or "the ninth"; and the day begins from sunset, as in Genesis i. 5. Part of a day is also spoken of as a whole day, as the two disciples on the way to Emmaus spoke in reference to the crucifixion of our Lord (Luke xxiv. 21). Now, as then, distances are measured not by kilometres but by the days or hours which it takes to travel over them. (See Genesis xxx. 36, xxxi. 23; 1 Kings xix. 4.)

Genesis iv. 20 says that Jabal was "the father of all such as dwell in tents and have cattle." The same form of speech is still used. A man who invents a thing or who first uses it is said to be its father.

The common salutation in Palestine is the same now as in Biblical times. "Peace be to you" (Genesis xliii. 23). People still say when surprised at an occurrence, "What has God wrought!" (Numbers xxiii. 23). A man who wishes to be thought in earnest says, "As God liveth," or "As

the Lord liveth" (2 Samuel ii. 27; Jeremiah iv. 2). One not related by blood but revered is addressed as "My father," as was Elijah (2 Kings ii. 12).

When David told Mephibosheth that for the sake of Saul his father he should eat at his table, Mephibosheth said that he was "a dead dog," that is, a person unworthy of the honour (2 Samuel ix. 8). The use of this tone of self-depreciation is still considered a part of politeness in the East. In talking to you a courteous Chinaman overestimates you and yours, and speaks disparagingly of himself and of his belongings.

The account that we read in 2 Kings iv. of Elisha's transactions with the Shunammite woman contains many graphic descriptions of things as they are in the East now. A Chinese will not let you see that he is in trouble for a long time. He will tell you that his health and all belonging to him are well, and afterwards that he is dying. So the Shunammite said that she was well when her heart was breaking. I have seen Chinese clinging to the feet of those from whom they asked something, as the Shunammite did (2 Kings iv. 27).

A Jewish proverb says, "Teach thy tongue to say, 'I do not know.'" Job's friends incurred Divine anger because they had not taught their tongues to say this (Job xlii. 7). A neat phrase, a pointed proverb, an apt retort are now, and always have been, appreciated by Orientals. "I know the number of the stars," said a conceited astronomer to a Rabbi. "Do you?" replied the Rabbi; "then tell the number

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Photo by *American Colony, Jerusalem.*

A POTTER AT WORK.

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of teeth in your mouth." The astronomer put his finger into his mouth to count. "Ha, ha!" cried the Rabbi, laughing; "you don't know what is in your mouth, and yet you know all that's in heaven!"

The prophets gave object-lessons, for they knew that with simple people seeing is believing. Jeremiah and Ezekiel appealed to the eye and taught by symbolical acts. On one occasion Jeremiah bought a potter's earthen bottle, went into the valley of Hinnom, broke the bottle, and said to the crowd that followed him, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Even so will I break this people and this city, as one breaketh a potter's vessel, that cannot be made whole again" (Jeremiah xix. 2, 10, 11). An Oriental, when he wishes ruin to fall on an enemy, will run up to him and dash a piece of pottery on the ground before him. It is scenic imprecation.

The cursing in the maledictory Psalms is just what a dweller in the East often hears. People swear in the way that our Lord mentioned and condemned (Matthew v. 34–37). They swear by heaven, by their heads, by their beards, and so on.

The Chinese used to speak of their Emperor as monarch of the whole earth, and Daniel was using customary Oriental speech when he called Nebuchadnezzar King of Kings (Daniel ii. 37).

When exhorting His disciples to follow Him morally, our Lord often said, "I am the Way." This is the exact expression which an inhabitant of the Holy Land now uses if you ask him to direct you to some place. He does not point out the road, but

placing himself before you, says, "I am the way," and proceeds to lead you to your destination.

St. Paul said to the people who were being shipwrecked with him, "This day is the fourteenth day that ye wait and continue fasting, having taken nothing" (Acts xxvii. 33). We need not suppose that the people took no food at all during fourteen days. An amount much less than usual is "nothing" in Oriental language. A medical missionary in Syria tells us that patients profess to have taken nothing when they have only abstained from certain kinds of food.

The plain speaking in the Bible and the expressions which are in places embarrassing, are what is to be expected in writings, addressed, in the first instance, to Orientals. These people see no objection to them. They speak, without meaning harm, even before women and children, about natural things which our notion of decency forbids us to mention.

PITS AND WATERS

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JACOB'S WELL, HARAN.

CHAPTER XX

PITS AND WATERS

WHEN the head servant of Abraham went to seek a wife for Isaac, he made his camels "to kneel down without the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water" (Genesis xxiv. 11).

The well was outside the city. In the East, where water is scarce, a village generally grows up near a well or fountain. Abraham's servant asked for water to drink; Rebekah made haste, and let down her pitcher from her shoulder and said, "Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also." A similar request would be made now and a similar answer would be given, though a modern young lady of the country might not for your camels or horses put water into the trough—an article always found near wells, and frequently made of stone.

Canon Tristram once asked a drink from an Arab girl who had a water-jar on her shoulder. She set it down for his use, and would not accept any gratuity. Tears filled her eyes and she said that she gave the water freely for the love of God and for the sake of her mother, who had died lately.

Rebekah carried her "balass," or water-jar, on her shoulder. A modern Syrian woman does this, but an Egyptian carries it on her head.

The boys and girls of Bedouin life still meet at wells. The story of Jacob and Rachel is, even in minute details, a transcript of the Arab life of to-day. Evening is called now, as it was four thousand years ago, "the time that women go out to draw water."

A person going to an Eastern well brings a leather bucket and a rope with which to lower it. With this the woman of Samaria was provided, but our Lord was not. "The woman saith unto Him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with and the well is deep" (John iv. 11). He who for our sake became poor was travelling from Jerusalem to Capernaum without this necessary utensil for an Eastern journey.

Once General Gordon offered an Arab a drink of water. The man refused, saying that he "drank yesterday." This illustrates the value that is attached to water in dry countries, and enables us to understand why the servants of Isaac and the herdmen of Gerar quarrelled so much about wells (Genesis xxvi. 20, 21). Wells in the East are covered with great stones, like the one which Jacob rolled away from the mouth of the well at Haran (Genesis xxix. 3).

In Egypt and the Holy Land one sees a pit near every mud village. It was formed when earth or mud was taken out to build the village, and there are here and there empty bell-shaped

Photo by] [*F. W. McLellan.*

COMING FROM THE WELL.

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cisterns or reservoirs for water. It was doubtless into one of the latter that Joseph was thrown by his brethren (Genesis xxxvii. 24).

I have lived in countries where water stored in cisterns was our only supply, but there were so many inconveniences connected with this way of obtaining water that I could understand the expostulation in Jeremiah ii. 13: "My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

Cisterns of water are often concealed by a covering of earth, so that only their owners can find them. So the Spouse, in Canticles (iv. 12), was "a fountain sealed" to all but him whom her soul loved: she was his alone.

"And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man dig a pit and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein, the owner of the pit shall make it good" (Exodus xxi. 34). It is a pity that this law is not enforced at the present time, for wells and pits of all kinds are left open, and sometimes cause the death of beasts and even of men. We read in 1 Chronicles xi. 22 that Benaiah "slew a lion in the midst of a pit in a snowy day."

Our Lord asked, "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into a pit?" and, "Which of you shall have an ass, or an ox, fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?" (Luke vi. 39, xiv. 5). These pits are a real danger. A few years ago an English

medical man fell into an ancient cistern near Dothan, the mouth of which was concealed by snow. He was not hurt by the fall, but the inside of the pit was as smooth as glass and it was impossible to climb out. He called for help as loudly as he could, and was not discovered and pulled out until he had spent two days and nights in the pit.

In some places the Jordan is a swift torrent, with eddies and rapids. A friend of the writer had made up his mind to swim the river, but when he came to it he did not like the look of it. He asked himself, with Jeremiah, "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" My friend had not the strength and courage of the hippopotamus of which we read in the Book of Job: "Behold if the river overflow he trembleth not: he is confident though Jordan swell even to his mouth." And where the water was not deep the mire was, and that was as bad, as the Psalmist found, who prayed, "Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink" (lxix. 14).

"That ancient river, the river Kishon," is also dangerous to ford, owing to its muddy bottom.

The bathing of pilgrims in the Jordan at the Greek Easter is the nearest likeness of the baptisms of John which can now be seen.

From the Jordan we travelled across a barren plain for about two hours, and then came to the Dead Sea. Its water is clear, but far more salt than that of any other sea. When we bathed in it we could not sink.

We are told that there is a spring near the place

Photo by] *Bonfils.*

THE JORDAN.

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of Elijah's sacrifice, and from this, no doubt, he got water even when there had been drought in the land for three years. That this spring never dries up is shown by the presence of living fresh-water molluscs, which would die if water were at any time to fail them (Geikie's "Holy Land and the Bible," vol. ii. p. 288).

The fact that the Mediterranean Sea has no tide and comes only, however agitated, to one point, adds force and significance to the words, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." Because of its want of tides it is a chained force.

So also no other sea could give the illustration which the prophet derived from the Mediterranean as he watched its waters engulfing and casting up the sandy, chalky soil of the beach under the lash of the west wind, as one sees in the Riviera and in Palestine: "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt."

PLANTS AND TREES

CHAPTER XXI

PLANTS AND TREES

WHITE broom is "pleasant to the sight" (Genesis ii. 9). It was under this tree that Elijah sat down and "requested for himself that he might die" (1 Kings xix. 4).

The mandrakes, or love-apples, found by Reuben and desired by Rachel are still believed to be love-stimulators (Genesis xxx. 14–17; Song of Songs vii. 13).

Jacob sent pistachio nuts to Joseph (Genesis xliii. 11). The pistachio grows in the Riviera as well as in Palestine.

In Genesis xlix. 11 Judah is represented "binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine," and having so much wine that he washes his garments in it. At Eshcol, "the torrent of the cluster," the spies cut a huge cluster as a specimen. A vineyard with a "fence" and a tower in the midst of it and "the stones gathered out" is characteristic of the kingdom of Judah. "The vine was the emblem of the nation on the coins of

the Maccabees, and in the colossal cluster of golden grapes which overhung the porch of the second Temple ; and the grapes of Judah still mark the tombstones of the Hebrew race in the oldest of their European cemeteries at Prague " (Stanley's " Sinai and Palestine ").

At Elim there " were twelve springs of water, and threescore and ten palm trees, and they [the Israelites] encamped there " (Exodus xv. 27). When choosing a camping-place in the desert we looked for palm-trees, for these indicate an oasis. " The palm has its foot in water and its head in fire." Palm trees yield dates when old, and righteous people bring forth fruit in old age (Psalm xcii. 12–15). Branches of palm trees are still carried by people to manifest joy as they were by those who went forth to meet our Lord coming to Jerusalem (John xii. 12, 13). (See Revelation vii. 9.)

The Israelites remembered " the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic " which they ate in Egypt (Numbers xi. 5). There is no want of these good things in modern Egypt. Labourers eat onions at every meal, and a great number of camels may be seen every morning in spring carrying melons into Cairo.

We read in Deuteronomy xxxii. 13 of " oil out of the flinty rock," and in Job xxix. 6 of the rock pouring out rivers of oil, and this is almost literally true, for olives flourish best on sandy or stony soil, such as much of the Holy Land is. Shoots spring-

ing up from the roots of the olive-tree furnished the simile, "Thy children shall be like olive plants round about thy table" (Psalm cxxviii. 3).

If the shoots are not a good kind, better ones are grafted upon them. Sometimes, however, a good olive from some cause ceases to bear. In this case a shoot of wild olive is grafted into the barren tree. It is to this practice that St. Paul alludes when he says of the Gentiles, "If some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them of the root and of the fatness of the olive-tree" (Romans xi. 17).

The wicked man "shall cast off his flower as the olive" (Job xv. 33). No tree has more flowers than the olive, but comparatively few of them become fruit. Very often, for some reason or another, "the labour of the olive shall fail" (Habakkuk iii. 17).

"When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow" (Deuteronomy xxiv. 20). All day long in November you hear in an olive country the beating and shaking of the trees. "Yet there shall be left gleanings, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost branches" (Isaiah xvii. 6). These gleanings are left now as they were then.

Old and conspicuous trees have, in China, shrines and images of gods placed under them as had the green trees mentioned in Deuteronomy xii. 3,

Ezekiel vi. 13, and other places. It is thought that these green trees were carob or locust trees, because of their dark-green leaves. Certainly the pods of the carob tree were "the husks which the swine did eat" in the parable of the prodigal son (Luke xv. 16).

At Jericho we saw many bushes having large thorns. David compared the ungodly to these thorns, and said "they cannot be taken with the hand: but the man that toucheth them must be armed with iron" (2 Samuel xxiii. 6, 7). It was of thorns of this kind that the crown was made for our Lord.

Solomon "spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall" (1 Kings iv. 33). The cedars of Lebanon grow on a plane 2,500 feet above the sea. There are now about three hundred of them, some being of a great age and size.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean" (Psalm li. 7). Hyssop and caper are probably the same. In Ecclesiastes xii. 5 the caper-berry is used as a synonym for appetite or desire, because it is a common condiment.

The almug-tree (1 Kings x. 11) is now called sandal-wood, and is perhaps the thyine wood in Revelation xviii. 12. This dark, hard, and fragrant wood was of great value. Cicero had a table made of it that cost £9,000. The sycamore tree is as common in Egypt and Palestine as when it was said that "Solomon made cedars to be as the sycamore

trees that are in the low country for abundance" (1 Kings x. 27).

The sycamore, growing quickly as it does, and sending its roots down far, illustrates the power of faith. "And the Lord said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you" (Luke xvii. 6).

It is easy to pull oneself up into a sycamore owing to the position of its branches, and as these generally stretch most of the way across a road, it was just the tree for Zaccheus to climb when he wished to see the great Teacher pass.

In the picture of old age in Ecclesiastes xii. 2–8 the words "the almond tree shall blossom" mean that the old person's hair is as white as the blossoms of the almond tree. The Hebrew name for this tree is "shaked," which means "to hasten." This was given to it on account of the fact that it "hastens" to put forth blossoms before the time of leaves is come. In the Book of Jeremiah there is a play upon the word: "The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen; for I will *hasten* My word to perform it" (i. 11, 12).

The henna plant is referred to in the Song of Songs (i. 14, iv. 13). It is eight or ten feet high, with fragrant yellow and white blossoms. It is now,

as of old, used by women to dye with a reddish colour their nails and the palms of their hands. Was the "rose of Sharon" (Songs of Songs ii. 1) a rose or an anemone? One suspects that it was the latter on passing over the plain of Sharon and seeing how plentiful anemones are there now.

Probably the "apple tree" of the same book (ii. 3, 5) is the orange. Certainly the oranges we saw at Jaffa might be described as "gold in filigree work of silver" (Proverbs xxv. 11). They were golden in colour, and many of them were encircled by silver-like blossoms.

The acacia (Isaiah xli. 19) abounds in the Jordan valley. It has often a parasite, the flower of which gives the tree the appearance of being on fire. It is called the "Burning Bush of Moses." The shittah-tree, which was so much used in the construction of the Tabernacle, is supposed to have been one of the many kinds of acacias.

The oleanders that we saw on Jordan's banks are probably the "willows by the watercourses." Their predecessors may have given the writer of the first Psalm his simile for the godly man: "He shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water." The river on both sides is deeply bordered with vegetation. Reeds, ten or twelve feet high, shaken in the wind (Matthew xi. 7), alternate with tamarisks, arbutus, myrtle, and other trees, in which "the fowls of the heaven have

their habitation, and sing among the branches" (Psalm civ. 12).

The oaks of Bashan were used at Tyre for making oars (Ezekiel xxvii. 6), but oak trees have now been almost all destroyed in that country.

"And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head" (Jonah iv. 6). A gourd is commonly trained in the East over temporary arbours. It grows with extraordinary rapidity.

Was Habakkuk inaccurate when he spoke of blossoming in connection with the fig tree (Habakkuk iii. 17)? No, for the fig has flowers like other plants, but we do not see them, as they are enclosed in the receptacle which becomes fruit. The reason our Lord expected figs on the tree which He cursed (Mark xi. 13, 14) was because it had leaves, and figs should come upon a fig tree with leaves, or even before them. The barren fig tree was a hypocrite. Fig trees, like grape vines, are trained over doors to give shade, and it is a sign of peaceful times when a man can sit under his own vine and his own fig tree.

The Lord Jesus came to show us the Father, and He was doing this when He pointed out how God clothed the grass of the field. The spring flowers are so plentiful in Palestine that they look as if they were not wild but sown designedly, and in some places animals must "feed among the lilies" (The Song of Songs iv. 5), if they are to feed at all. Arab children occasionally

give flowers to a teacher, and it may be that our Lord had received this attention when He said, "Consider the lilies."

> "Ye are the Scriptures of the earth
> Sweet Flowers and frail:
> A sermon speaks in every bud
> That woos the summer gale."

So many are the anemones, poppies, and tulips in the Holy Land that one of these may have been translated "lilies." In any case the lilies were red, and not white like ours. They were the colour of Solomon's robes of state, but "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." These beautiful flowers, however, do not last long. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth," for "the breath of the Lord," as Isaiah (xl. 7) calls the sirocco, or burning south-east wind, "bloweth upon it."

The "tare" in Matthew xiii. 24–30 is what we call "darnel." Before it comes into ear it is very like wheat, and is therefore left until the harvest, lest while men gather up the tares they root up the wheat with them. Archbishop Trench says ("Parables," p. 89) that in Ireland he has known an evicted tenant sow, in revenge, wild oats in the fields he was giving up. These, ripening and seeding themselves before the crops in which they were mingled, it became nearly impossible to get rid of them. This illustrates our Lord's parable of the tares. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed

in his field : which indeed is less than all seeds ; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof " (Matthew xiii. 31, 32).

The mustard of Palestine grows to a much greater size than with us. In " The Land and the Book," an Arab is quoted as saying, " A stalk of mustard was in my field, into which I was wont to climb, as men climb into a fig-tree."

PUNISHMENT

CHAPTER XXII

PUNISHMENT

A MAN who had murdered his wife said that it was only a family affair. This is what Eastern Governments think of manslaughter and murder. They consider that they are affairs that belong to the family of the man killed, and that it is their business and not the business of the Government to bring the slayer to justice.

Rebekah told Jacob that Esau intended to kill him and that he should take refuge with Laban his uncle, and she asked, "Why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?" (Genesis xxvii. 42–46). He would by the law of vengeance be himself slain.

The command to kill Joab and Shimei which David, just before his death, gave to Solomon (1 Kings ii. 5–9), makes us think of the vendetta, or heritage of woe, that used to be handed down from father to son in Italy and Corsica. Joab and Shimei were to be put to death, not as state criminals, but because Solomon was the "avenger of blood."

Bishop Sheepshanks found in Honolulu enclosures to which a person might escape who "smote his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past." This illustrates the appointment of cities of refuge as related in Numbers xxxv. 9–15.

Another mode of escaping from the avenger of blood still in use in the Holy Land is for the man who has killed some one to put himself under the protection of a powerful sheikh, and this can be done by merely calling upon his name in the presence of witnesses. This kind of sanctuary is frequently referred to by the Psalmist. "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will make mention of the name of the Lord our God." "Save me, O God, by Thy name" (xx. 7, liv. 1). In Proverbs xviii. 10 we read, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it and is safe." The sheikh to whose tent a man hunted by an "avenger of blood" betakes himself, or under whose name he seeks protection, is bound to take vengeance if the man is slain. With the customary cry, "Who is on my side? who?" (2 Kings ix. 32), he calls his retainers, marches to the dwellings of those who killed the invoker of his name, and endeavours to kill them and seize their property during three days. At the end of this time a white flag is hoisted on a pole or spear by the relatives of the man who was put to death, in honour of his avenger and also as a public notification that he is free from the guilt of blood. In allusion to this last custom the Psalmist says, "In the name of our God we will set up our

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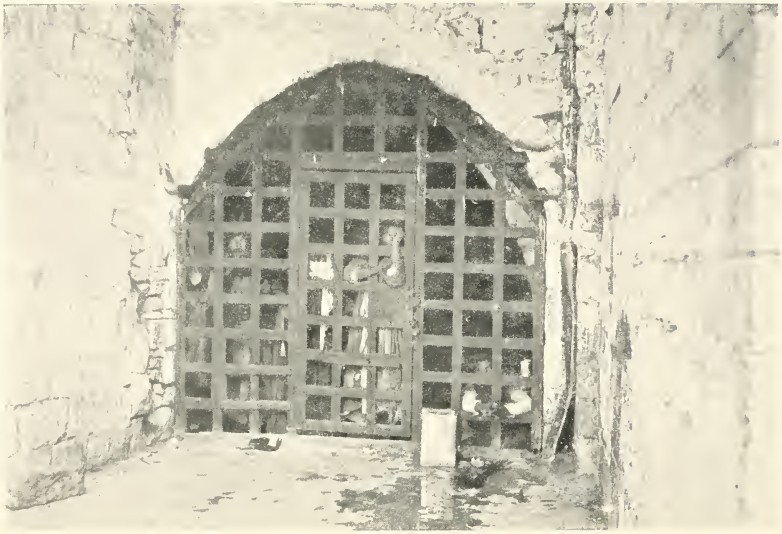

Photo by] [*J. W. McLellan.*

EASTERN PRISON.

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banners" (xx. 5). In Palestine a money payment in lieu of blood is accepted. The fine for man-slaughter is 4,000 piastres—about £35—and half that for woman-slaughter.

No such ransom was admitted in Israel (Numbers xxxv. 31).

It does not say that the chief butler and the chief baker were put into prison for any crime other than offending the King of Egypt (Genesis xl. 1–3). In Turkey it is esteemed an act of Imperial clemency when the Sultan orders the release from prison of all persons against whom there is no charge!

When Joseph was brought out of the dungeon to interpret Pharaoh's dream, "he shaved himself and changed his raiment" (Genesis xli. 14). If the dungeon were like the prisons which the writer saw at Canton and Tangier, a good deal of brushing up would have been needed before Joseph could go into the royal presence.

When Mohammed Ali wished to punish an Egyptian village, he used to put an end to it in the manner commanded in Deuteronomy xiii. 16.

The punishment inflicted upon Korah (Numbers xvi. 31–33) and upon Achan (Joshua vii. 24, 25) were eminently Eastern. They were not only destroyed themselves, but their wives and children were put to the same terrible death.

A man's wife and children were considered to belong to him as much as his hands and feet, and they were involved in his doom if he became liable

to punishment. It is, or was until very recently, the same in China. There the unit is not an individual but a family, and if one member suffer the others do too. A man was brought before a Chinese magistrate. A missionary friend of the writer knowing that it was not this man but his brother who had committed the crime, went to the mandarin, or magistrate, and told him what he knew. That individual was quite indifferent, and said, "I've got one of the family, and it does not matter which of them I punish." In his opinion if one individual did wrong all the members of his family were equally guilty. (See 1 Samuel xxii. 17.) Life in the East is a community life.

Samuel's sons "turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment" (1 Samuel viii. 3). Before England improved things in Egypt a judge had to be bribed even to grant a trial. Without a bribe an accused person might linger half his life in prison neither acquitted nor condemned. The tariff for an acquittal was somewhat higher. There are many administrators of the law in Eastern countries now who are like Felix. "He [Felix] hoped that money would be given him of Paul: wherefore also he sent for him the oftener and communed with him" (Acts xxiv. 26).

I have seen in a Chinese court of "justice" a leather implement used for striking a prisoner suspected of lying, upon the cheek and mouth. Was it with a similar sole-of-a-shoe like thing that Chenaanah smote Micaiah on the cheek or

Ananias commanded St. Paul to be smitten on the mouth? (1 Kings xxii. 24; Acts xxiii. 2).

"I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let a beam be pulled out from his house, and let him be lifted up and fastened thereon" (Ezra vi. 11). Impaling has been inflicted not very long ago in Burmah and Persia. The punishment of being "cut in pieces" (Daniel ii. 5, iii. 29) is what the Chinese call "lingchi," or a lingering death.

The chief captain commanded that St. Paul "should be examined by scourging" (Acts xxii. 24). I was once in a Chinese court when this kind of examination began. I fled, and there was much laughter at my squeamishness.

"Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross" (John xix. 19). A title with his name and crime inscribed is put on the cage in which a Chinese criminal is starved and strangled to death. The cross was not the lofty, massive one of pictures, but a small roughly made one such as I have seen in the execution-ground at Canton. "They that passed by" could more easily "rail on" one fixed to this kind of cross (Mark xv. 29).

There is the same mocking when a criminal is being put to death now in China, and the executioner gets his clothes as a perquisite, as did the Roman soldiers (Matthew xxvii. 35).

When St. Paul was imprisoned Felix gave an order not to forbid any of his friends to minister unto him" (Acts xxiv. 23). No food, or scarcely

any, is given in Eastern prisons, but the friends of the inmates are allowed to bring it to them and are supposed to do so. It was once the same in England, and we read of charitable persons going then to "feed the prisoners at Newgate."

SERPENTS AND INSECTS

CHAPTER XXIII

SERPENTS AND INSECTS

In the first book of the Bible Eve is said to have been tempted by a serpent, and in the last book "the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world" is called "the old serpent" (Revelation xii. 9, xx. 2). Most ancient nations worshipped the serpent, and there are Devil-worshippers now. We know how much the dragon is thought of in its kingdom of China. On an Egyptian monument a deity in human shape is depicted piercing the head of a serpent with a spear.

"Dan shall be a serpent by the way," says the dying Jacob, "an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider falleth backward" (Genesis xlix. 17). In his "Natural History of the Bible," p. 274, Canon Tristram writes: "I have known my horse, when I was riding in the Sahara, suddenly start and rear, trembling and perspiring in every limb, and no persuasion would induce him to proceed. I was quite unable to account for his terror till I noticed a cerastes coiled up in a depression two or three paces in front, with its basilisk

eyes steadily fixed on us, and no doubt preparing for a spring as the horse passed."

In ancient times snake-charmers, apparently by pressing a particular part of the necks of the reptiles mesmerised, or temporarily paralysed them so that they stretched themselves out at full length, and became for the time perfectly rigid ; their activity being restored at pleasure by seizing them by the tails and rolling them briskly between the hands. Was this the way the skill of the Egyptian magicians was shown before Pharaoh (Exodus vii. 9)?

The operation of a serpent-charmer has been thus described. He began "playing on his pipe, and after proceeding from one part of the garden to another for some minutes, stopped at a part of the wall much injured by age, and intimated that a serpent was within. He then played quicker and louder, when, almost immediately, a large cobra put forth its hooded head, and the man ran fearlessly to the spot, seized it by the throat and drew it out. He then showed the poison fangs and beat them out."

Perhaps this beating out of the poison fangs explains the words of the Psalmist in reference to those whose "poison is like the poison of a serpent." "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth" (Psalm lviii. 5, 6). But these wicked persons are, he says, like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear : which will not hearken "to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." The serpent has no ears, so that this about the adder stopping her ears is only a

figure of speech similar to the saying that the serpent shall eat dust (Genesis iii. 14; Isaiah lxv. 25; Micah vii. 17).

In Numbers xxi. 6 we are told that "fiery serpents bit the people." The shore of the Red Sea, where this took place still abounds in reptiles. "Behold, I will send serpents, basilisks, among you, which will not be charmed; and they shall bite you" (Jeremiah viii. 17).

Amos (v. 19) speaks of serpents hiding in the crevices of the mud walls of houses. Egyptian and Indian snake-charmers profess to know if there be a serpent in a house without seeing it. In Malta a viper fastened on St. Paul's hand (Acts xxviii. 3). There is no "venomous beast" of the kind in the island now, probably because at present it is densely populated and there are no trees or underwood.

"The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands" (Proverbs xxx. 27). They march like a disciplined army. They climb upon houses, they enter windows, so much so at Nazareth in 1865, that people had to give up their dwellings to them. So dense is the cloud they make that "the sun and the moon are darkened," and the sound of their wings is "like the noise of a flame of fire that devoureth the stubble" (Joel ii. 2–11; Revelation ix. 9).

Locusts might be eaten (Leviticus xi. 22), and Arabs now do eat a few of them roasted or stewed with butter. Dr. Tristram found them when cooked in this way "very good." It was probably upon locust insects rather than upon carob tree beans that

John the Baptist supported existence. He eat them with wild honey, which is part of the diet of Bedouins now ; they squeeze it from the combs and store it in skins (1 Kings xiv. 3, margin).

Germans keep bees on their farms near Jaffa, and as they are also developing dairies the land is again "flowing with milk and honey." Baalzebub, "the lord of flies," was worshipped by the Philistines, hoping probably to be saved from the annoyance which flies and mosquitoes caused then in that country, as they do now. Ahaziah sent to this lord of flies to inquire whether he should recover of his sickness (2 Kings i. 2). "The Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in Egypt, and for the bee that is in Assyria" (Isaiah vii. 18). This means that He shall make a sound like that which men make to attract and lead to the hive a swarm of bees.

SERVANTS

CHAPTER XXIV

SERVANTS

ELIEZER the servant of Abraham ruled over all that his master had, and was sent to obtain a wife for Isaac (Genesis xxiv. 2–4). Obadiah, too, was set over all the house of Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 3). It is the same in modern Oriental houses. Great power is given to the head confidential servant. Pashas are sometimes governed by energetic eunuchs.

The form of oath which Abraham caused the servant to take was not unlike that which is employed in China and India to-day. Many who were once slaves have got into high positions in Turkey as Joseph did in Egypt (Genesis xl. 40). Sir Samuel Baker's boy, Saat, had been carried off by an Arab caravan in the same way as Joseph while he was tending goats; hidden in a gum sack, and finally taken to Cairo and sold as a slave.

On the wall-paintings in the tombs of ancient Egyptians are depicted overseers and governors of the rich who were in the same position as was Joseph in the house of Potiphar. "And he [Potiphar] knew not aught that was with him, save

the bread which he did eat" (Genesis xxxix. 6). Potiphar would not allow a foreigner, especially of the shepherd caste, to touch his food because of the Egyptian laws of ceremonial cleanness. Everything else Joseph managed.

In Genesis xlix. 15 Jacob says of Issachar, "he bowed his shoulder to bear." This describes, too, the Chinese coolie carrying loads by means of a bamboo pole which rests on his shoulder. Naaman the Syrian laid two bags of silver and two changes of raiment upon two of his servants, and they bare them before Gehazi (2 Kings v. 23). In the West servants generally carry things behind their masters, in the East they do so before them. When a Chinese mandarin pays an official visit, a servant carries before him on a level with his head the mandarin's visiting-card, which is a piece of red paper about eight inches long and three inches wide.

The Egyptians made the lives of the Israelites bitter with hard service, in "mortar and in brick" (Exodus i. 14). Jeremiah speaks of "service without wages" (xxii. 13). People may be seen now in Egypt doing the same sort of work, but in very different conditions. There is no *corvée*, or enforced labour, now, though that continued until the British occupation. The government, too, of the stick or courbash has passed away.

In Exodus i. 11 we read that the Israelites "built for Pharaoh store cities Pithom and Raamses." The few remains of these cities have been carefully examined, and it is said that parts of them are com-

posed of bricks made with straw, others of bricks held together by bits of reed when the supply of straw or stubble had given out, and yet other parts of bricks in which there is neither straw nor reeds. This is thought to be a confirmation of the Bible story.

See Exodus v. 14–19 ; 1 Kings ix. 23 ; 2 Chronicles ii. 2, and think also of the amount of forced labour that is represented by the Egyptian pyramids and the remains of the temples on the Nile.

Because of the fraud which they had committed the inhabitants of Gibeon were made " hewers of wood and drawers of water " (Joshua ix. 21). The expression is used to denote a life of drudgery, but until we have seen " hewers of wood and drawers of water " in the East we do not realise the full significance of these words.

In 1 Samuel xxv. 7 we read that David demanded from Nabal a customary backsheesh, or present, at shearing-time for protecting his flock, or, at least, for not taking any of them away. It is necessary still in the same country to pay blackmail to the roving Arabs to prevent them stealing sheep and goats.

A young man of Egypt, a servant (slave) to an Amalekite, told David that his master left him because he, the slave, fell sick (1 Samuel xxx. 13). Leaving the sick slave in war-time was more excusable than the way people in recent times leave slaves, captured in Africa, to die on the road to the sea if they get ill.

How worthless captives in ancient warfare were

considered we may judge from the fact that those taken in the great siege of Jerusalem were sold for slaves at ninepence a head.

In time of peace the usual market price of a slave was thirty pieces of silver—about £3. (See Zechariah xi. 12.)

Mention is made of footmen to run before chariots in 1 Samuel viii. 11 ; 2 Samuel xv. 1 ; 1 Kings i. 5. So pleased was Elijah because King Ahab had, even for a short time, honoured Jehovah, that he acted as a *sais*, and ran some twenty miles before the king's chariot to the entrance of Jezreel. Jeremiah (xii. 5) asked, "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?"

Many of us have seen in Cairo the grooms that run before the carriages of the Khedive and of other high officials to clear the way. They are very picturesque with tassels dangling from fezes, gold-embroidered red jackets and sleeves of white muslin.

Like these runners were the men in the time of Jeremiah who carried messages. Of these the prophet said, "One post shall run to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, to show the King of Babylon that his city is taken" (Jeremiah li. 31).

People who have only had experience of careless, stupid European servants cannot fully understand Psalm cxxiii. 2 : "Behold as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress ; so our eyes look unto the Lord our God." In China servants

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WOMAN GRINDING AT A MILL.

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seem to be thought-readers, for they anticipate all the wishes of their masters. It is seldom necessary to give an order. Every look is observed and its meaning interpreted.

In Jeremiah xxv. 10 and in Revelation xviii. 22 we are told that the sound of millstones shall cease. When the sound of the grinding was low (Ecclesiastes xii. 4), it was a sign of misery, but it is not so now, but rather of prosperity. In Egypt and Syria steam-mills are replacing the old institution of two women grinding at a mill. In places, however, two women may still be seen sitting at a hand-mill facing each other. Both women hold the handle by which the upper millstone is turned round on the "nether" one. The women pull to or push from, and the woman whose right hand is disengaged throws in the grain through the hole in the upper stone. It is tedious work, and only women whose position is low in the East, unskilled servants, and slaves do it (Matthew xxiv. 41; Isaiah xlvii. 2). From the king to the maid-servant behind the mill, was a description of all, from the highest to the lowest inhabitants of Egypt (Exodus xi. 5).

Jeremiah laments that the young men bare the mill (Lamentations v. 13). It was humiliation for the young men of Israel to have to grind at the mill, work which was generally assigned to female slaves.

> "To grind in brazen fetters, under task,
> Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,"

was the lot of Samson (Judges xvi. 21).

Two kinds of millstones were and are used for grinding corn. One is turned by an ass (Luke xvii. 2, in margin of Revised Version) and is much heavier than the stones of a handmill. It is often seen in Palestine, and as there is a hole always in it it could easily be hung about the neck of a person about to be sunk in the depth of the sea.

Monarchs like to have foreign servants from their colonies or dependencies ; it gives an object-lesson of the great extension of their dominions. Queen Victoria always had Indian attendants. So when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, conquered Jerusalem, he ordered the master of his eunuchs to get for his palace pages, handsome, intelligent, and well-educated Israelitish youths (Daniel i. 3, 4).

When the publicans, or tax-gatherers, asked John the Baptist what they should do he answered, " Extort no more than that which is appointed you " (Luke iii. 12, 13). The way taxes were collected in those days was like that of the *ancien régime* in France and the plan that prevails now in Turkey. The right of collecting taxes in each district is sold to the highest bidder, and the speculator who buys it often sublets it to less wealthy collectors. The principal tax that " is appointed " is 10 per cent. on the produce of the communal land ; but much more than this is extorted. One method is this. A crop of corn, for instance, must be surveyed and the payment on it assessed before it is cut, but this the tax-farmer, or publican, postpones until the corn is becoming too ripe. The owner has only one resource. He

must agree to give the publican not the 10 per cent. that is appointed, but 30 or 40 per cent. before he will settle the matter.

Toll, like the octroi of France and Spain, is collected on things imported into a town or considerable village. Near the entrance of each of these may be seen a booth of branches or a hut. This is the "receipt of custom" where a toll-collector sits as once did St. Matthew (ix. 9). This kind of publican plunders the peasants as unmercifully as the other kinds. "Bears and lions," says a proverb, "may be the fiercest wild beasts in the forests, but publicans and informers are the worst in the cities."

When our Lord admitted as a disciple Matthew, a publican, it was as though in India now a Brahmin had raised a Pariah to his intimate friendship. The term "sinners" was used indiscriminately in speaking of thieves, publicans, usurers, gamblers, shepherds, and sellers of fruit grown in the Sabbath year.

SHEPHERDS AND SHEEP

CHAPTER XXV

SHEPHERDS AND SHEEP

THE hard life of an Eastern shepherd as it was, and in many respects is now, was described by Jacob in his complaint to Laban: "The rams of the flocks [now, as then, the males alone are used for food] have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it. . . . Thus I was; in the day that drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep fled from mine eyes" (Genesis xxxi. 38–40). The alteration between blazing sun during the day and biting frost during the night is felt by every traveller in these parts. A shepherd may not see his home for days or even weeks, journeying far in search of pasture. Joseph's brethren were so long absent that their father became anxious to know if they were alive and well (Genesis xxxvii. 13, 14). Laban's daughters tended sheep (Genesis xxix. 6); so did those of Jethro (Exodus ii. 16). Girls sometimes do the same now.

"Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock" (Psalm lxxx. 1). The shepherd

walks before and the flock follow from the fold or from the houses in which they were shut up during the night. As there are no fences and often many flocks in the same place, it is the business of each shepherd to keep his own sheep and goats from straying or from joining other flocks, and to lead them to where they can get pasture and water.

The shepherd calls to them from time to time to keep them from lagging. The sheep know his voice and hasten on ; but if a stranger call they stop short, lift up their heads in alarm, and, if the call is repeated, turn and flee, because they know not the voice of a stranger. Though each shepherd uses the same call—" Tahho, tahho ! "—the sheep never make a mistake.

Being asked how he knew his books, one from the other, for hardly any of them were lettered, Charles Lamb asked, " How does a shepherd know his sheep? " Certainly the Oriental shepherd does know his sheep, and has a name for most of them. " He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out " (John x. 3). The name is generally given to a sheep on account of some peculiarity, " black ear," " lame leg," and such-like.

It is sad to see a shepherd lead sheep and lambs to the slaughter ; it would be less affecting if they were forcibly driven. The modern shepherd, however, is as ready as David was to protect the lives of his flock when they are attacked by beasts of prey, and these in the shape of wolves, leopards, and jackals still prowl about in the hills. When the

flock is a large one " hirelings " have to be employed, but they sometimes flee when they see wolves coming (John x. 12). There are also human robbers, and, fighting against these, the good shepherd still " giveth his life for the sheep."

" David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep ; and when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth : and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him and slew him " (1 Samuel xvii. 33–36). " The Arabs," says Thevenot, " fear a lion so little that they often pursue him with only a club in their hand, and kill him."

The shepherd carries a staff, and with this he guides his flock to green pastures and corrects those of them that are inclined to wander. Micah means to feed and to rule when he says (vii. 14), " Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage."

Besides a crook to pull back sheep going astray, the shepherd of Palestine often has a club cased at its lower end with iron to protect the sheep. These are the rod and staff of Psalm xxiii. 4. It was the staff in the hand of David that disgusted the giant Goliath (1 Samuel xvii. 43). David also had a sling, and so have shepherds now. They throw stones not at the sheep, but just beyond them, when the sheep go on too far, and in this easy way they stop them.

With the dawn of day each shepherd " putteth

forth " his sheep, counting them as they pass under his rod, which he holds over the doorway. When God said by the prophet Ezekiel (xx. 37), " I will cause you to pass under the rod," He meant that He would keep a constant watch over His people. (See Jeremiah xxxiii. 13.)

Saul, in pursuit of David, " came to the sheep-cotes by the way, where was a cave " (1 Samuel xxiv. 3). Caves are used for folds still. Across the Jordan, on the other hand, where caves are not to be had sheepfolds were and are built (Numbers xxxii. 16) and surrounded by walls with thorn-bushes on the top of them. Over this wall the robber climbs, but the shepherd goes through the rough gate. " To him the porter openeth " (John x. 1, 2). A Syrian shepherd may often be seen carrying a sick lamb on his shoulder, under his arm, or in the bosom of his cotton shirt (Isaiah xl. 11), as Scottish Highland shepherds carry helpless lambs in the folds of their plaids.

There are shepherds now, as there were in the days of Ezekiel and Zechariah, who do not lead back the strayed or seek the lost (Ezekiel xxxiv. 3, 4; Zechariah xi. 6), but these are the exceptions. As a rule the shepherd will follow a sheep that has strayed into a dangerous place, and, indeed, it is his interest to do so, for sometimes, as was the case with Jacob (Genesis xxxi. 39), he has to make a loss good to his master. (See Amos iii. 12.)

Both the shepherd and the sheep lie down during the hot hours in the shadow of a rock or in the shade

of a tree (Canticles i. 7). When evening falls the flock follow the shepherd to the nearest running water, or, it may be, to a well.

In the Holy Land there are rocky limestone hills, covered in many places with coarse grass and low shrubs. They are not enclosed, but in other respects somewhat resemble the sheep-runs of Australia. These are the "pastures of the wilderness" (Joel i. 20), which the Psalmist says are "clothed with flocks" (lxv. 12).

We read of the Israelites taking as prey as many as 675,000 sheep (Numbers xxxi. 32), and the Assyrian inscriptions often give quite as large numbers of sheep as captured from conquered people. Solomon sacrificed 120,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple (1 Kings viii. 63).

If there are no goats to lead them, sheep huddle together and will not move on and graze. For this reason goats and sheep are kept together in the same flock. Sometimes the he-goats bully the sheep, and then the shepherd has to separate them for a time. This fact is used by our Lord to illustrate the last judicial separation (Matthew xxv. 32, 33).

Why should the goat symbolise wickedness and the sheep innocence? Perhaps the former gives more trouble to the shepherd.

The horns of rams are used for trumpets in places in the East now as they were by the Israelites during their wanderings (Exodus xix. 13, margin).

WAR

CHAPTER XXVI

WAR

ISHMAEL is the same to-day as he was four thousand years ago—a wild man, with his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. Not long ago a European was attacked by fourteen Arabs, wounded on the head, robbed of his knapsack, and stripped quite naked.

The old Jewish notions on war are seen in Deuteronomy ii. 34, vii. 2, 16; Psalm cxxxvii. 9; 1 Samuel xv. 3. They are explained and illustrated by referring to Greek and Roman writers. Joshua mourned because the army of Israel was defeated owing to the sin of Achan (Joshua vii. 11, 12). A large amount of valuable property fell into the hands of the Israelites at Jericho. All was devoted to the service of God, but Achan stole some of it. Achan was less loyal than the Japanese who went with the other armies to Pekin in 1901. They looted for their country and not for themselves. The money realised was sent to their Government and not kept by individuals.

Joshua may be compared with modern religious

soldiers, such as Gustavus Adolphus, Oliver Cromwell, Henry Havelock, "Stonewall" Jackson, Charles Gordon.

"And Adoni-bezek fled; and they [the Israelites] pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes" (Judges i. 6). We see by the monuments discovered in Assyria and Egypt that this sort of maiming was one of the usual amenities of ancient warfare.

"He [Sisera] asked water, and she [Jael] gave him milk; she brought him butter in a lordly dish" (Judges v. 25). What is here called milk and butter is the "leben" of modern Arabs, and it is kept by them, as it was in Jael's day, in skin bottles. It is sour curdled milk, and has a soporific effect.

"She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer" (Judges v. 26). By the former is meant a tent-peg, and by the latter the mallet by which the peg was driven into the ground.

The names of the princes of Midian (Judges viii. 3, 5) were as terrifying as those of American Indian braves. Oreb and Zeeb meant "Raven" and "Wolf," and Zeba and Zalmunna "Slaughter" and "Wandering Shade."

King Agag said to Samuel, "Surely the bitterness of death is past" (1 Samuel xv. 32). History repeated itself when Sultan Azis asked those who not long ago deposed him, "Will you guarantee my life—will the soldiers respect it?"

Saul chose David for his armour-bearer because he was "cunning in playing, and a mighty man of

valour, and a man of war, and prudent in speech, and a comely person" (1 Samuel xvi. 18). So, too, a modern prince or general or his wife chooses for an equerry or aide-de-camp a youth who is musical, brave, tactful, and handsome.

David made a raid on the Jerahmeelites and the Kenites and killed them all, women as well as men, lest any of them should tell what he had done (1 Samuel xxvii. 11). "Dead men tell no tales."

Before the late Dowager Empress of China fled from Pekin in 1901 she had much treasure buried, and the coolies who buried it were put to death lest they should reveal the place.

"At the return of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle" (2 Samuel xi. 1). Even down to our last war with France the troops on both sides ceased to fight during the winters and were quite friendly.

When Elisha told Hazael that he, Hazael, would slay the young men of the Israelites with the sword and dash to pieces their little children and rip up their women with child, Hazael said, "But what is thy servant, which is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?" (2 Kings viii. 12, 13). So far was Hazael from being shocked at the prophecy, as the Authorised Version implies, that he thought the "thing" too "great" for one who was not yet King of Syria to have the honour of doing. Eastern rulers value themselves on the amount of carnage they cause. The British Governor of Hong Kong once asked the Chinese Governor of Canton if he

had beheaded so many men, mentioning a large number, since he came into office. "It must have been many more," was the proud answer.

Jehu made a feast for the worshippers of Baal in the temple of the god and had them all slain (2 Kings x. 19–26). With similar "subtilty" Mohammed Ali invited the mamelukes to an entertainment in the Citadel at Cairo and ordered them to be shot.

It was enacted that "whosoever would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman" (2 Chronicles xv. 13). This kind of conversion by the sword was afterwards developed by Mohammed and the Inquisitors.

In Isaiah lii. 8 we read: "The voice of thy watchmen! they lift up the voice, together do they sing; for they shall see, eye to eye, when the Lord returneth to Zion." And in lxii. 6: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, they shall never hold their peace day nor night." I have been prevented from sleeping in Canton by the voice of watchmen. They lifted up their voices, sang together, and held not their peace the whole night. In war-time at Jerusalem watchmen were so stationed that the eyes of one met the eyes of another, and every part of the walls was under the observation of some one. In the Song of Songs (v. 7) the bride says that she was beaten and wounded by watchmen, and in Chinese and other Eastern towns these officials still make vigorous use of sticks.

Many of the duties of Roman soldiers in Palestine resembled those of our policemen. They guarded our Lord, watched St. Peter in prison, kept order in the Temple, and brought St. Paul in custody to Rome.

John the Baptist told the soldiers to do violence to no man, not to exact anything wrongfully, and to be content with their wages (Luke iii. 14). The Turkish soldier needs this advice now, only he sometimes gets no wages with which to be content. A Chinese village was disturbed, and soldiers were sent to keep the peace. The first day after their arrival they demanded rice from the inhabitants, but cooked it themselves with their own charcoal, the second day they commandeered both rice and charcoal, and the third day they forced the people to cook for them. Turkish soldiers act in much the same way when billeted in a village to enforce the payment of extortionate taxes. They demand the best food, eating up the people as they eat bread, as the Psalmist said (xiv. 4), they plunder them and beat them if they complain.

"The wages of sin is death," says St. Paul (Romans vi. 23). The word in the Greek for "wages" means a soldier's pay, and that was as small in the case of a soldier of ancient Rome as that which a soldier in the conscript armies of Europe now receives. He generally only gets a halfpenny a day. Truly we work for very little when we work for the devil.

WORSHIP

CHAPTER XXVII

WORSHIP

We read that the Israelites worshipped every now and then the sun, moon, and stars. They were tempted to do so, for in the East the host of heaven have a brightness far greater than in our cloudy climate. To Abraham, however, it was revealed that the sun, the moon, and the stars were not Elohim—the high and Mighty Ones ; that there was but one Elohim, one high and Mighty One, the Almighty Maker of them all. This a story told by the Arabs sets forth. They say that Abraham said one night of a star, " This is my Lord." But when the star set, he said, " I like not those who vanish away." And when he saw the moon rising, he said, " This is my Lord." But when the moon, too, set, he said, " Verily, if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one who goeth astray." When he saw the sun rising, he said, " This is my Lord : this is greater than moon or star." But the sun went down likewise, and Abraham said, " O my people, I am clear of these things. I turn my face to Him who hath made the heaven and the earth."

Sometimes in a Chinese village there is a

temple at either end, and the people believe that a god belonging to one temple has no jurisdiction in the other. Part of the village is governed by one god and part by another, and the people worship accordingly. They think that there are local, tribal deities, some of them, for instance, presiding over the hills, others over the plain (1 Kings xx. 23). Jacob held this view (Genesis xxviii. 11–17). He thought that the care and protection of the god of his fathers extended no further than to the immediate neighbourhood of his home. The dream that he had of a ladder connecting earth and heaven taught the home-keeping youth that a day's walk had not brought him away from God. "And Jacob awakened out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."

We read in Genesis xxxv. 4 that Jacob asked his household to give to him "all the strange gods which were in their hand, and the rings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was in Shechem." These rings which the patriarch buried were charms as well as ornaments. The Hebrews wore crescents, or "little moons," because they regarded the new moon as a symbol of good fortune. Isaiah (iii. 20) mentions amulets as a part of female dress, and they are so to-day in the East and, I believe, also in London Society. Eastern men, women, and children would be uncomfortable without amulets or magic charms to protect them from the "evil eye" and other evils. These

charms are made of precious stones or of gold, or they are scraps from the religious books of the wearer, written after certain rules, perhaps also with mysterious diagrams. The document is sewn up in a small bag, either three-cornered or like a heart, and is worn next to the skin from infancy to death, as a Roman Catholic wears a scapulary.

Camels and horses have horn and other kinds of talismans hung round their necks "for luck," and even fruit-trees have mystic characters marked upon them to prevent blight.

Nowhere is that debased kind of worship which we call superstition more prevalent than in Palestine, and it is women who are its chief supporters. This last fact was admitted by one of them. Being told that many of her beliefs were superstitions she said, "Truly they are, but they will not die till we old women die." This gives particular point to 1 Timothy iv. 7, where St. Paul says, "Refuse profane and old wives' fables."

In nearly every Chinese house may be seen teraphim, or images of gods like those which Rachel stole from her father when she fled with her husband (Genesis xxxi. 19). They probably resembled the small images of saints, which are now carried about by Oriental Christians, and may have been honoured and consulted in much the same way. Some of these saints are thought to be able to grant the request of those who pray for children, and perhaps Rachel stole her father's gods thinking that they could do the same.

Teraphim are called by Josephus household gods, and he says that it was usual for the owner to carry them with him for good fortune, if he went to a distance from home. How Laban made use of them is not told. He probably did so by consulting them as oracles; just as we find Joseph in Egypt divining by a cup (Genesis xliv. 5), perhaps by the movements of water in it or of substances put into it. (See 2 Kings xxiii. 24.)

I have often, when living in China, seen idols being repaired and painted up for a temple, and have been reminded of Isaiah's description of the manufacture of graven images (xl. 19, 20, xliv. 12–18). A shopman in Shanghai is continually advertising "silks, porcelains, and fancy gods." Inside, or it may be outside, shops which supply this kind of goods, fancy gods are to be seen lying in what look like lumber-heaps. "No image-maker worships the gods" is a common saying. "He knows what stuff they are made of."

Though afraid to disregard them, the Chinese freely laugh at the objects and ceremonies of their worship. The religion of most of them is a mixture of fear and fun. If a missionary is sarcastic about idols after the manner of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 27) and the writer of the 115th Psalm, the worshippers are not offended but rather pleased, because they do not love the idols but only fear them.

The Chinese keep bad oranges and other inferior things for temple offerings, as people in England put doubtful coins into offertory bags. Such attempts

to cheat God are forbidden in Deuteronomy xv. 21. (See Malachi i. 8, 13, 14.)

In order to injure their enemies, the Boxers at Pekin in 1900 went through a ritual of imprecation, a commination service like that which Balak wished Balaam to celebrate against the Israelites (Numbers xxii.–xxvi.).

Balak brought Balaam "into the high places of Baal" to devote the Israelites to destruction (Numbers xxii. 41). The votaries of most religions have mountains which they consider to be especially sacred.

On the top of many hills in the Holy Land are domed and whited sepulchres where saints, prophets, and chiefs have been buried. The inhabitants in whom paganism lingers offer sacrifices to the spirits of these worthies. This is the old worship of "high places," which is so often condemned in the Old Testament.

In the time of the Judges some of the Israelites thought that God could be cheered with wine (Judges ix. 13), and pleased by a father killing his only child (xi. 39). There are savages even now whose notions about God are not more elevated.

Chinese women can easily sympathise with Hannah, saddened by reproaches for her barrenness, going to the place of worship and praying fervently for a man-child, as among themselves prayer to the "goddess of Mercy" for children is very common.

After relating how Hannah prayed in the Temple for a son the Bible says: "And it came to pass,

as she continued praying before God, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart ; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard : therefore Eli thought she had been drunken " (1 Samuel i. 13). We would think it strange for people to say their private prayers aloud ; but in the East they pray aloud and read aloud even in the most public places. Therefore it was that Eli thought that Hannah praying without outspoken words could scarcely be sober. In her prayer Hannah said that God " raiseth up the poor out of the dust and the needy from the dunghill " (1 Samuel ii. 8). Chinese beggars often sit and lie on dust heaps and dung heaps.

The Jews turned towards the Temple at Jerusalem and prayed wherever they might be at the appointed hours ; some of them taking care that the moment should overtake them when they were in the most public places, such as the corners of the streets (1 Kings viii. 44–48 ; Daniel vi. 10). In the same way now Mohammedans turn their faces in worship to their sanctuary at Mecca and pray at appointed hours. The Moslem prays in public without any false shame. He lifts up his hands and bows his head with his face to the ground. (See Nehemiah viii. 6.)

The eighth chapter of the First Book of Kings and 1 Chronicles xvi., which describe how Solomon prayed and offered sacrifices on behalf of his people, remind some of us of the accounts we have heard of the similar act which the Emperor of China transacts

on the Chinese New Year's Day in the Temple of Heaven at Pekin. Here the Emperor, who, like Melchizedek, is high-priest as well as king, prays for a blessing on his people and offers a bullock whole and without blemish. I have seen the altar upon which the victim is slain. It consists of a triple circular terrace of white marble, each terrace being surrounded by a richly carved balustrade.

In 1 Kings xviii. 28 we read that the worshippers of Baal cut themselves with knives ("swords" in margin) and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. Addressing the Philistines Jeremiah asks "How long wilt thou cut thyself?" (xlvii. 5). Once a year in and around a mosque at Cairo there is held a Mohammedan festival at which enthusiasts wound their cheeks, chests, and other parts of their bodies with the points of swords.

Naaman said, "When my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand" (2 Kings v. 18). I once saw the headman of the Mohammedans in Damascus leaning his hand on the hand of an inferior in the way here described, as they walked out of a mosque together. (See 2 Kings vii. 2, 17.)

In their prayers Mohammedans repeat the words "Allah is great!" many times, and then kneel down and touch the ground with their foreheads. The Israelites, too, used to bow often, for the word "Selah," which stands at the end of many verses in the Psalms, means simply "Bow."

"Damsels playing with timbrels," like those which

the Psalmist mentions as taking part in the worship of the sanctuary (lxviii. 25), may often be heard in the East now.

I understood better what Psalm cxlix. 3, "Let them praise His name in the dance," means when I saw sacred dances in Buddhist temples in Japan. The motions of the dancing priestesses are slow, graceful, and quiet. Their dancing is not one of steps, for they move their arms much more than their feet. Perhaps, however, the vigorous, not to say wild, movements of the dancing dervishes one used to see at Cairo, is more the sort of thing the Psalmist meant. Certainly the dance that was thought to give praise was very different from what is seen in a British ball-room.

In a town in North Africa I was going into a mosque when people rushed at me with sticks and stones. Moslems may have learned this exclusiveness from Jews. In Lamentations i. 10 it is said, "She hath seen that the heathen are entered into her sanctuary, concerning whom thou didst command that they should not enter into thy congregation."

When a new bishop was installed in Malta he rode into his cathedral upon an ass. The ceremonies which I saw upon that occasion were very grand, though they were supposed to be modelled upon the entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem (Zechariah ix. 9).

The Arabs offer a ewe lamb when a boy is born and sprinkle blood upon the foundation of a new building. Three he-goats were slain at the ceremonial opening of the Jaffa railway on September 26, 1892. Every

such sacrifice is called "kurbân," that is, a gift to God. It is almost the same word as that which St. Mark uses (vii. 11).

The details of the ceremony of the redemption of a first-born man-child which are observed now by the Jews are doubtless much the same as when Jesus was brought to the Temple to be presented to the Lord (Luke ii. 22).

Our Lord said to the woman of Sychar: "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father" (John iv. 21). Our Lord may have pointed to Gerizim as He spoke of this mountain. Those of us who have lived in China and Japan know the importance that is attached to worshipping in certain holy hills and mountains. "And upon this came His disciples; and they marvelled that He was speaking with a woman" (John iv. 27). For a teacher to speak to a woman in public was considered then very indecorous, as indeed it is now, in the Far East. "No Rabbi," says the Talmud, "is to speak with a woman, even if she be his wife, in the public street."

The repetition in the prayers of the heathen which our Lord condemned was "deorum aures contundere," to stun the ears of the gods, as if they could not or would not hear, "nisi idem dictum sit centies," unless the same thing were repeated a hundred times. I have heard a priest in a Chinese and a Japanese temple repeat a prayer or a sacred name over and over perhaps a hundred times, and beat a drum at each repetition to make sure that it was said.

In the Bible merely giving respect and reverence is called worship. This is what is meant when it is said that the Magi fell down and worshipped the infant Saviour, the servant in the parable his lord, and Cornelius St. Peter (Matthew ii. 11, xviii. 26; Acts x. 25). It was in the same sense that "a leper," "a ruler," a "woman of Canaan," the man "out of the tombs," and the man "born blind" worshipped Christ (Matthew viii. 2, ix. 18, xv. 25; Mark v. 6; John ix. 38). These people did not mean to worship Christ as God; they only did what Eastern people do now when they desire to show reverence and gratitude.

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